

Daniel 9:1-23 Commentary

DANIEL 8

DANIEL 9:24

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Daniel 9:1 In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of Median descent, who was made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans--

- **Darius:** Da 1:21 5:31 6:1,28 11:1
- [Daniel 9 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

OUTLINE Daniel 9:1-27

Daniel's Prayer for and God's Prophecy of Future Restoration of Israel

1. Daniel Prays According to the Word and Will of God. Daniel 9:1-19
 - a. Daniel 9:1, 2: Daniel Prompted to Prayer by Prophecy of Jeremiah
 - b. Daniel 9:3: Daniel Prepares His Heart for Prayer
 - c. Daniel 9:4-19: Daniel's Prayer of Confession and Petition
 - 1) Daniel 9:4-14: Confession

2) Daniel 9:15, 17, 18, 19: Petition

2. God's Answer in a Prophecy. Daniel 9:20-27

a. Daniel 9:20, 22, 23: Gabriel God's Messenger to Daniel

b. Daniel 9:24, 25, 26, 27: God's Prophetic Plan for Israel's Future

Note the order: A prophet in the Word of God in prayer precedes the panoramic prophecy. This great chapter teaches on prayer not by precept but by letting us listen to a godly man praying!

The prayer is a prayer regarding **70 years**. The answer is an answer regarding **70 weeks of years**...The prayer is a prayer for **restoration**. The answer is the answer of **ultimate restoration** in the coming of Messiah. So the chapter is divided into two parts, the **prayer** and its **answer**. And while the prayer occurred at one point in time, one day in the life of Daniel, the answer extends to the Kingdom of Christ...The prayer is the main thrust of the chapter. In fact, there is twice as much attention in verse numbers given to the prayer as there is to its answer. Prophecy is important, but it cannot substitute for prayer. God never calls us to be so speculative or so attached to the future that we lose sight of the present. That's the essence of the significance of the prayer. ([John MacArthur - Elements of True Prayer, Part 1](#))

The first year - Daniel 9:23 states that Daniel was given a vision in this **first year**, and this vision represents the third of four visions which are summarized below...

Vision #1 - Daniel 7:1 - First year of King Belshazzar (~553BC)

Vision #2 - Daniel 8:1 - Third year of King Belshazzar (~551BC)

Vision #3 - Daniel 9:23 - First year of Darius the Mede (~538/539BC)

Vision #4 - Daniel 10:1 - Third year of Cyrus the Persian (~535/536BC)

The first year of [Darius \(note\)](#) the son of [Ahasuerus \(note\)](#) of Median descent - In Da 5:30-note we see God **remove** Belshazzar, the King (and kingdom) of Babylon (cf Da 2:21-note) and then in Da 5:31-note we observe Him **establish** "Darius the Mede (who) received the kingdom at about age of sixty-two" (539BC) so that **vision #3** occurs about 12 years after **vision #2** in Daniel 8. Stated another way, the vision of Daniel 9 occurred after Daniel 5 and presumably at some time during Daniel 6.

Daniel 9:2 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.

- **Observed:** Da 8:15,16 Ps 119:24,99,100 Mt 24:15 Mk 13:14 Ac 8:34 1Ti 4:13 2Ti 3:15, 16, 17 1Pe 1:10, 11, 12 2Pe 1:19, 20, 21 Rev 1:3
- **to Jeremiah:** 2Ch 36:21 Jer 25:11,12 27:7 29:10 Zec 7:5
- **the desolations:** Ps 74:3, 4, 5, 6, 7 79:1,2 Isa 6:11,12 24:10, 11, 12 64:10 Jer 7:34 25:18 Jer 26:6,18 La 1:1 Mic 3:12
- [Daniel 9 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

DANIEL A SCRIPTURE SATURATED SAINT!

In the first year - 539BC (see Da 5:30, 31-note). Repetition of time phrase from Da 9:1.

I, Daniel - Who wrote Daniel? This declaration could not be much clearer and yet the so-called "higher critics" and liberal "scholars" seek to debunk Daniel as a forgery and a fake. They do so at great peril to their credibility and their eternal destiny for our Lord Jesus Christ clearly affirmed that the book of Daniel was written by Daniel and that is good enough for me! (see Mt 24:15)

Observed - It seems that even in ancient times the skills of **Inductive Bible Study**, specifically **observation**, were practiced by God's saints. How valuable and vital is the skill of **inductive Bible study** for God's saints today as we see events transpiring in our world which suggest that we might soon come to the end of this age, which will culminate at the return of our Lord Jesus Christ (**Second Coming**) to crush evil (which is growing at an alarming rate in America, circa 2010) and bring truth and righteousness to light when His glory fills the whole earth (An oft repeated prophecy - Nu 14:21 Ps 72:19 Isa 6:3 11:9 Hab 2:14).

Guzik - Daniel understood something from reading the words of God's prophets. Prophecy is meant to be understood - perhaps not in every detail, but certainly in its main points...passionately as he did in Daniel 9? Daniel knew that God's promises invite our prayers and participation; they don't exclude our prayers and participation. "Nothing, therefore, can be better for us, than to ask for what he has promised." (Calvin) This principle is repeated in many passages. 2 Peter 3:12 indicates that there is a sense in which we can hasten the Lord's coming by our holy conduct and godly lives; we can also hasten the Lord's coming through evangelism because Paul says that God's prophetic focus on Israel will resume when the fullness of the Gentiles has come in (Romans 11:25). This means that we can also hasten the Lord's coming through prayer, even as Daniel asked for a speedy fulfillment of prophecy regarding captive Israel (Daniel 9). We can also pray Even so, come, Lord Jesus! (Revelation 22:20) If you want Jesus to come soon, there is something you can do about it!

C H Spurgeon once cried out in essence for a "generation of Daniels" declaring "Oh! That you studied your Bibles more! Oh! That we all did! How we could plead the promises! How often we should prevail with God when we could hold Him to His word, and say, 'Fulfill this Word unto Thy servant, whereon Thou hast caused me to hope.' Oh! It is grand praying when our mouth is full of God's Word, for there is no word that can prevail with Him like His own."

I like how **Rosscup** introduces his exposition of Daniel 9 on a **great prayer** answered by a **great prophecy**...

Daniel is **sensitive** to his people's need, **saturated** with God's Word, **sympathetic** with fellow Israelites in their plight, and **surrendered** to God. (Rosscup, J. E. An Exposition on Prayer in the Bible: Igniting the Fuel to Flame Our Communication with God) (Bolding Added)

I, Daniel, observed in the books - Not the devotionals. Not the commentaries (even the one you are reading!). **The books** of God's Word, in this case Jeremiah the prophet. Remember that Daniel was in an important position of leadership under Darius (cf Da 6:1,2-note), but his "busyness" did not lead to "barrenness" (spiritually speaking) for it did not prevent him from serious Bible study and prayer (cp Da 6:10 - "three times a day"!): **Beloved, you may be the president of a corporation or the janitor in that corporation, but in either case you are in daily, even "desperate" need of the intake of the pure milk of God's Truth in a world filled with deception and lies!** (cp Mt 4:4, John 8:31, 32, 36, 1Pe 2:1, 2-note = **Take care** of the business of verse one so that you will have the "infant-like" yearning and hunger of verse two!; He 5:14-note, Job 23:12-note -Does this have anything to do with why/how Job was able to bear up under unspeakable tribulations and sufferings?; Joshua 1:8-note, Ps 1:1-note, Ps 1:2-note, Ps 1:3-note-What are the promises from God in Joshua and Psalm 1?; Jas 1:23, 24-note; Jas 1:25-note). **Beloved, mark it down** -- If you are too busy for serious time with your Lord in His clearly spoken, accurately recorded, everlasting, very personal Word of Truth and Life, then simply put...

**YOU ARE
TOO BUSY!**

John Phillips offers a good word of caution...

If, in our study of the sacred page, we are so eager to get on with exploring prophecies that we neglect such passages as this, then we are in no spiritual condition to study prophecy at all. **Prophecy is not in the Bible just to satisfy our curiosity about the future; it's there to help develop our spiritual capacity.** (for the present) (Exploring the Book of Daniel: An Expository Commentary) (Bolding and parenthetical statement added)

The word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet - This phrase clearly teaches that God spoke to and through His servants, the prophets. What they recorded was not "their own words" but "God's very words" in written form. Do you realize that every time you open the Bible and read a passage or paragraph, God is speaking directly to you? Do you really believe that He is speaking to you? He is because He has! While the canon of Scripture is closed, God still speaks clearly in His Word, the Bible. What other Book can you read where the Creator of the Universe is speaking to you? What other Book can you read where the "Author" Himself indwells you, teaches you, enables you to understand and then gives you the power to comply? So what's your excuse? Why are you not on your knees daily allowing Him to speak to your wayward heart? The amazing truth is that He the Almighty Creator even yearns for an intimate, personal relationship with you His creation. You are very important to Him, regardless of what messages you have heard from misguided parents, friends and foes or the world system. God so loved the World that He gave His only begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. (Jn 3:16) **Have you accepted His amazing, "life changing" invitation to believe in the Lord Jesus (Acts 16:31, Acts 4:12, Jn 8:12, 24)?**

The number of years - What does this phrase say about Daniel's approach to the interpretation of prophecy? He does not say **the symbolism** of the **"years"** nor the **"spiritualization"** of the **"years"** but **the number of years**. Beloved when the **plain sense** (literal, normative grammatical sense) of what God is saying makes **good sense**, we dare not take it in some **other sense** (allegorical,

symbolical or spiritualized sense), lest our interpretation end up being **no-sense** (nonsense)!

Namely seventy years - Daniel interprets the prophecy of **seventy years** as literal and does not attempt to **spiritualize** it (**See Literal Interpretation**), as so often happens when one attempts to interpret Scripture which is of the "apocalyptic" genre (cp attempts to spiritualize the **specific** number "**one thousand**" in Re 20:2-[note](#), Re 20:3-[note](#), Re 20:4-[note](#), Rev 20:5-[note](#), Re 20:6-[note](#), Re 20:7-[note](#) - not once but **six times!**). (See related topics - [The Rise of Allegorical Interpretation](#) and [Understanding Numbers](#))

Daniel was reading **Jeremiah the prophet** and this may have been the passage that he was reading...

(Jeremiah writes that) From the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah (~627BC = Inception of Jeremiah's ministry - cp Jer 1:2), even to this day, these twenty-three years the word of the LORD has come to me, and I have spoken to you again and again, but you have not listened. And the LORD has sent to you all His servants the prophets again and again (referring to true prophets, not the false prophets rampant in Jeremiah's day - cp Je 14:14, 15, 16, Je 23:16, 17, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31ff, Je 27:14, 15), but you have not listened nor inclined your ear to hear, saying, **'Turn** now everyone from his evil way and from the evil of your deeds, and **dwel**l on the land which the LORD has given to you and your forefathers forever and ever; 6 and **do not go after** other gods to serve them and to worship them, and **do not provoke** Me to anger with the work of your hands (Idolatry), and I will do you no harm (A conditional promise).' 7 "Yet you have not listened to Me," declares the LORD, "in order that you might provoke Me to anger with the work of your hands to your own harm. 8 "Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts, 'Because you have not obeyed My words, 9 behold, I will send and take all the families of the north (cp Je 1:14, 15, 16), 'declares the LORD,' and I will send to **Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon**, My servant (cp Jer 27:6 - Refusal to listen to his servants the prophets would necessitate His use of another type of "servant" to get Israel's attention! Note that God is not the Author of evil but in the mystery of the sovereignty of God, He is able to use evil men and nations to bring about His desired ends. And at the same time He is perfectly justified in punishing these evil men and nations as described below in verse 12), and will bring them against this land (The Land of Israel), and against its inhabitants, and against all these nations round about; and I will utterly destroy them, and make them a horror, and a hissing, and an everlasting desolation. 10 'Moreover, I will take from them the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones and the light of the lamp. 11 'And this whole land shall be a desolation and a horror, and these nations shall 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 (Babylon) an everlasting desolation (A prophecy which was partially fulfilled in 539BC in Da 5:31 but which will be fully fulfilled in Re 18:2-[note](#), Re 18:19-[note](#)). (Jer 25:3-12)

WHY SEVENTY YEARS?

Why did God specify seventy years? First we must understand God's ordinance of the **Sabbath year** which He specified to Moses at Mount Sinai as recorded in Leviticus 25...

Speak to the sons of Israel, and say to them, 'When you come into the land which I shall give you, then **the land shall have a sabbath to the LORD**. 'Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard and gather in its crop, but during the seventh year the land shall have a sabbath rest, a sabbath to the LORD; you shall not sow your field nor prune your vineyard. Your harvest's aftergrowth you shall not reap, and your grapes of untrimmed vines you shall not gather; the land shall have a sabbatical year. And all of you shall have the sabbath products of the land for food; yourself, and your male and female slaves, and your hired man and your foreign resident, those who live as aliens with you. (Lev 25:2, 3, 4, 5, 6)

Comment: The year of Sabbath Rest for the land also had other important associations including **(1) the remission of debts** (Dt 31:10) and **(2) the reading of His Word** ("the law", presumably the Torah) so that they might hear God's Word (How important is it that we today preach this same Word!) and learn a proper **reverential fear** of Him (Dt 31:11, 12, 13).

THE FEAR OF JEHOVAH

Remember that "**fear**" of **God** is a good thing, not a bad thing. There are many advantages associated with proper fear of Jehovah, a doctrine found in both the Old and New Testaments! **For a profitable time of study, read over the following passages and make a list of the spiritual "dividends" that accrue when one fears the LORD (this would make a simple but powerful Sunday School lesson)** - Pr 1:7 [cf Pr 15:33, Ps 111:10-[note](#), Mic 6:9], Pr 9:10, Ps 25:14 [Where Hebrew word for "secret" conveys the following senses - **intimate**=Pr 3:32, **sweet fellowship**=Ps 55:14, **friendship**=Job 29:4, **secret**

counsel=Am 3:7; Job 1:1, 9, 28:28 [What does fear cause Job to do which is similar to Pr 3:7, 8:13, 16:6?], Does fear of the LORD come naturally? = Ps 34:11-[note](#) [cf. the prayer of Ps 119:38-[note](#)]; Ps 115:13-[note](#); Ps 103:11-[note](#); Ps 103:13-[note](#); Ps 103:17-[note](#); Ps 145:19-[note](#); Ps 147:11-[note](#); What do we have to do? Pr 1:29 - Play the chorus [We Choose the Fear of the LORD](#); Pr 10:27, Pr 14:26, Pr 14:27, Pr 19:23, Pr 22:4, What is fear an "antidote" for? **See** Pr 23:17 **and** Pr 29:25; Ec 8:12, 13, Ge 22:12, Ps 33:18-[note](#); Ps 34:7-[note](#); Ps 34:9-[note](#); Ps 86:11-[note](#); Beware = Isa 29:13; Ps 2:11-[note](#) [where "reverence" = fear]; Pr 31:30; Ps 128:1-[note](#) [cf Pr 28:14, Ps 112:1-[note](#), Ps 112:2-[note](#), Ps 112:3-[note](#)]; Lk 12:4, 5; Acts 9:31; 2Cor 7:1-[note](#); Ep 5:21-note, Php 2:12-note; 1Pe 1:17-note; 1Pe 2:17-note; Mal 4:2; Ec 12:13, 14, Re 11:18-[note](#), Re 19:5-[note](#))

Again in **Leviticus** (and Dt 28:1-30:20, esp Dt 30:19, 20) God made it clear that if His people Israel obeyed Him, He would abundantly bless them, but...

if you do not obey (shama = listen so as to obey, used repeatedly with this sense in Daniel 9!) Me and do not carry out all these commandments, if, instead, you reject (Hebrew "ma'ac" = to despise, spurn, disdain, scorn. **Wow! Woe!**) My statutes, and if your soul abhors (Heb = "qa'al" = intense aversion, detest, loath, vilely cast away! **Woe again!**) My ordinances so as not to carry out all My commandments, and so break My covenant, I, in turn, will do this to you (**Lev 26:14, 15, 16a**)...

I will scatter (you) (Hebrew = zarah = disperse as scattering seed; see diaspora) among the nations (Northern 10 Tribes were taken captive to Assyria in 722BC, the Southern 2 Tribes to Babylon, 605, 597, 586BC) and will draw out a sword after you, as **your land** (Israel) becomes desolate and your cities become waste. 'Then (**When?**) **the land** (of Israel) will enjoy its **sabbaths** all the days of the desolation, while you are in your enemies' land; then **the land** (of Israel) will **rest** (Hebrew = shabbath) and enjoy its **sabbaths** (Hebrew = shabbath). All the days of its desolation (referring to the land of Israel) it will observe the **rest** which it did not observe on your **sabbaths**, while you were living on it. (**Lev 26:33, 34, 35**)

In **Second Chronicles** we read that...

those (In Israel and Jerusalem) who had escaped from the sword he (Nebuchadnezzar) carried away to Babylon; and they were servants to him and to his sons **until** the rule of the kingdom of Persia, (Always take note of "**until**" which specifies when something comes to an end, in this case the Babylonian captivity) 21 to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah (Jer 25:11,12, Je 29:10), **until** (Note) the land (of Israel) had enjoyed its **sabbaths** (In Le 25:4 [cf. Ex 23:10, 11] God had specified that the land was to "rest" and lay fallow for one year - other important events were also commanded to occur every 7 years - Dt 15:1, Ex 21:2, Ne 10:31). All the days of its desolation it kept sabbath **until seventy years** were complete (70 sabbaths would be 70 x 7 years or 490 years which is the period from about the time of Saul to the Babylonian captivity during which they did not keep the sabbath for the land). 22 Now in the first year of [Cyrus king of Persia](#) -- in order to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah-- the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he sent a proclamation throughout his kingdom, and also put it in writing, saying, 23 Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, 'The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and He has appointed me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever there is among you of all His people, may the LORD his God be with him, and let him go up!' (2Chr 36:20, 21, 22, 23, cf Ezra 1:1, 2, 3, 4 and Isa 48:28, 45:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7)

Comment: In punishing Israel, Jehovah used a Gentile **King Nebuchadnezzar** to carry them off into Babylonian captivity for seventy years and then used another Gentile **King Cyrus** of Persia (Read Isaiah's incredible prophecy of Cyrus almost 150 years before Cyrus was even born and about 100 years before Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the Temple and sacked Jerusalem in 586BC - Is 44:28, Is 45:1, 2, 3, 4) to bring them out of captivity and back to the land of Israel. **How sovereign is God in history? Do you believe He is that sovereign in your life, beloved? We can trust Him. He is in control even when our life seems out of control!**

Eugene Merrill adds that ""The real tragedy of the exile was not the removal of the people nor even the utter destruction of the city and the temple. It was the departure of their God from their midst, an absence symbolized in one of Ezekiel's visions by the movement of the Shekinah from the temple to the summit of the Mount of Olives (Ezek 11:23-[see note](#)).

If we take **605BC** (the first of the three deportations, followed by 597BC and 586BC) as the inception of the 70 years, Daniel would have received this **vision** in about the 67th or 68th year of the Babylonian captivity (First year of Darius ~539/538BC) and thus he would realize that the exile would soon "expire" (536BC). **Remember that revelation should always cause a response. And what does this Scriptural revelation prompt this great man of God to do? In this case Daniel's response was to pray!**

**ISRAEL'S
INCORRIGIBLE
IDOLATRY**

The other reason God took Judah into exile and sent desolation on the land and His Temple is because His people were flagrantly worshipping idols rather than the true and living God. God states His case in second Chronicles declaring...

Because they have forsaken Me and have burned incense to other gods, that they might provoke Me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore My wrath will be poured out on this place and it shall not be quenched. (2Chr 34:25)

Comment: A W Tozer said that "Among the sins to which the human heart is prone, hardly any other is more hateful to God than **idolatry**, for **idolatry** is at bottom a libel on His character. The idolatrous heart assumes that God is other than He is - in itself a monstrous sin - and substitutes for the true God one made after its own likeness. Always this God will conform to the image of the one who created it and will be base or pure, cruel or kind, according to the moral state of the mind from which it emerges.

A god begotten in the shadows of a fallen heart will quite naturally be no true likeness of the true God. "Thou thoughtest," said the Lord to the wicked man in the psalm, "that I was altogether such as one as thyself." Surely this must be a serious affront to the Most High God before whom cherubim and seraphim continually do cry, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth."

Let us beware lest we in our pride accept the erroneous notion that idolatry consists only in kneeling before visible objects of adoration, and that civilized peoples are therefore free from it.

The essence of idolatry is the entertainment of thoughts about God that are unworthy of Him.

It begins in the mind and may be present where no overt act of worship has taken place. ([Knowledge Of The Holy](#)) (Note also that "**Idolatry**" begins with a "**Big I**"! Need I say more!)

In a more general sense, Israel's failure to keep the **sabbath** years and her continual seeking like a harlot after abominable **idols** reflected specific aspects of her disobedience to the Mosaic Covenant ("The Ten Commandments") and its "addendum" (Note Dt 29:1 specifically says "besides the covenant...") which was spoken through Moses at Moab (Dt 29:1 - In the Hebrew Bible this verse is the last verse of Dt 28 and thus may be a concluding statement of the preceding declaration rather than an introduction to what follows. Some refer to this as the "Palestinian Covenant" viewing it as giving Israel the title to the land [Dt 30:5] but MacArthur sees that the emphasis is more on the change of Israel's heart - cf Dt 29:4 and Dt 30:6 this latter an allusion to the "New Covenant" of Jer 31:31-34)

(The context is the "addendum" issued at Moab) And all the nations (the Gentiles) shall say, 'Why has the LORD done thus to this land (Israel)? Why this great outburst of anger?' Then men shall say, '**Because they forsook the covenant of the LORD, the God of their fathers**, which He made with them when He brought them out of the land of Egypt.' (So even the heathen recognize Israel's failure to remain faithful to her covenant promises to Jehovah!) (Dt 29:24, 25)

Daniel 9:3 So I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth and ashes.

- **I set:** Da 6:10 Neh 1:4-11 Ps 102:13-17 Jer 29:10-13 33:3 Ezek 36:37 Jas 5:16-18
- **with fasting:** Da 10:2,3 Ezra 8:21 9:5 10:6 Neh 1:4 9:1 Es 4:1-3,16 Ps 35:13 Ps 69:10,11 Isa 22:12 Joe 1:13 2:12 Jonah 3:6-9 Lk 2:37 Ac 10:30 Jas 4:8-10
- [Daniel 9 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

SUPERNATURAL RESPONSE OF A SCRIPTURE SATURATED SAINT

Too many people study Bible prophecy out of curiosity, but fail to let their study impact their spiritual life. Not so with Daniel. Daniel was undoubtedly a man of prayer as emphasized by the fact that four of the twelve chapters record him praying and about 125 of the 356 verses in the book deal in some way with his prayers! (see esp Da 2:17, 18, 6:10, 11, 13,) Is it any surprise that Daniel was highly esteemed in heaven's throne room (Daniel 9:23; 10:11, 18)? **Lord, give us more "highly esteemed Daniels" in these dark days of decadence and decline. Amen.**

Ray Pritchard notes that...

Our prayers never exist in a vacuum. The prayer that touches God's heart must be rooted in God's Word. As Luther said, we ought to take God's promises and fling them back in his face. "Lord, you said you would do this. You made a promise. Now, Lord, do what you said you would do." Spurgeon noted that "God loves to be believed in." Well, of course. We all love to be believed in. Why should God be any different? The prayer that changes the world begins and builds on what God has already revealed. When you pray, stand on the promises of God. ([The Positive Power of Prayer](#))

So - Time in the Word of God stimulated a need for prayer to the God of the Word! (cf Acts 6:4 for association of Word and Prayer). In other words, because Daniel believed in that the literal **seventy years** of captivity was almost completed, his belief (faith) in this truth prompted him to direct his attention heavenward. **Beloved, if your study of God's holy Word is not impacting your prayer life (content, frequency, fervency) then something is dreadfully wrong with your Bible study!**

Too often our interest in the prophetic Scriptures is of a curious and speculative nature, or else we conclude that God will carry out His sovereign purpose no matter what we do, and so we do not concern ourselves about those matters. Saturation with Scriptures motivated Daniel to pray. In God's sovereignty, the promise of Jeremiah 29 would indeed come to pass. God's sovereignty is a mystery which He has chosen to balance with man's responsibility and thus Daniel prayed for he knew God would fulfill. He prayed because saints are commanded to pray. James says we have not because we ask not and we do not receive when we ask with wrong motives (Jas 4:2, 3). The implication clearly is we are to pray and to do so in God's will which is directed by His Word. In the present context, the shortness of time before the prophecy of Jeremiah 29 was to be fulfilled created in this highly esteemed servant an urgency to intercede. **As you watch events transpire in America circa 2010, do you not feel a sense of urgency, dear highly esteemed saint (That is what you are because He calls you "Beloved" - cf 1Th 1:4-note)?** When we contemplate that the last words of the Bible are a prophecy of the **imminent** return of the Messiah (In Rev 22:20-note He promises "Yes, I am coming quickly"), should not the saint's supernatural response be to cry out like John...

AMEN.

COME, LORD JESUS.

Revelation 22:20-note

Is this prayer not a parallel to some of the first words that our Lord taught the disciples to pray...

THY KINGDOM

COME!

Matthew 6:10-note

The call for God's kingdom to come is tantamount to a cry for the return of the King of that Kingdom, the Lord Jesus Christ (cf Maranatha = "Our Lord, come!" 1Co 16:22b). As we see the day of His return drawing nigh (not setting dates of course but with a sense of the signs of the times undergirding the **doctrine of imminency**), how fitting to pray these great prayers without ceasing (cf 1Th 5:17-note)!

Daniel 9:2 says this is "the word of **Jehovah**" (Note the only use of **Jehovah** in Daniel is Daniel 9:2, 4, 10, 13, 14, 20) and if He is communicating with us, we should be growing in our desire to communicate with Him!

Strauss adds that...

**Daniel's secret lay in his
regular and right use of the Scriptures.**

This is the best possible prompting to prayer. Bible reading and prayer stand or fall together. If your prayer life is lacking, take up the Word of God and give yourself to quiet and reflective reading. Daniel was reading his Bible and it was that which prompted him to pray...When a man of God believes the promises of God his faith becomes active, not passive. Faith always tends to draw the believing one to God. (Ibid)

You might be asking, **why pray** when you already know what is going to transpire? God is sovereign, so why should I pray? The reason we are to pray for things we know God promises will come to pass, is because God tells us to pray. For example, **Jesus** commands us to...

Ask, and it shall be given to you; **seek**, and you shall find; **knock**, and it shall be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it shall be opened. (Mt 7:7, 8) (**Note:** Ask, seek and knock are all present

imperative = command to "pray without ceasing"!)

Jesus said...

Until now you have asked for nothing in My name. Ask and you will receive that your joy may be made full. (Jn 16:24)

John MacArthur addresses the question of "Why pray when you know what God is going to do?"...

Now, human reason would say this: You're reading along in Jeremiah, and you read it will be seventy years, and God always fulfills His Word, right? So your response would be what's to pray for. What are you going pray for? It's cut and dried. Seventy years, it's over. What are we praying for? Now, that's the typical response of human reason. It doesn't make sense. But that is not Daniel's response...when Daniel read of the plan of God, rather than becoming fatalistic about it and slamming shut those...the book or closing down the scroll, and saying, "Well, that's that. Let me get my rocker, man. It's almost over." He went immediately to his knees in brokenness and penitence and cried out to God in sackcloth and ashes on the behalf of his people....You say, "Why?" Let me tell you why. You know why we ought to pray when we find out God's purposes in His Word? Not because God needs our prayers to do it, but because we need to line up with God's causes. Prayer is for us. It's for us... We line our hearts up with His causes. We see our sinfulness. We see the need of His grace and power. And we submit ourselves to His plan. ([Elements of True Prayer](#))

And so Daniel prays a prayer of faith, a prayer that claims the promise which God has said He would perform. The prayer of faith is not based on stirring up enough emotion so that I can lay hold of the Word of God and make it "work". Instead, it is taking God at His Word and laying hold of God's character and God's promises.

Seventy years was also mentioned by Jeremiah in chapter 29 and this may have been the passage that prompted Daniel's prayer...

Now these are the words of the letter which **Jeremiah the prophet** sent from Jerusalem to the rest of the elders of the exile, the priests, the **prophets** (among whom would be Daniel), and all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had taken into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon....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. 11 '**For I know the plans that I have for you,**' (Remember this declaration is directed to Israel - however the principle can of course be applied however by NT believers) declares the LORD, '**plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope** (First fulfilled with Israel's return from Babylon, but which will be ultimately and fully fulfilled at the **Second Coming** of the Messiah ["The Blessed Hope" Titus 2:13-note], when He establishes His Kingdom on earth and reigns His throne in Jerusalem for **one thousand years**).

'Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. 'And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart. 'And I will be found by you,' declares the LORD, 'and I will restore your fortunes and will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you,' declares the LORD, 'and I will bring you back to the place from where I sent you into exile.' (Jeremiah 29:1, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, compare to a similar promise in 1Ki 8:33, 34)

FERVENT PRAYER

I gave my attention - More literally this reads

"I set my face toward Adonai Elohim."

Daniel is not just "shooting up" a casual "arrow prayer". He is not just giving God a passing nod. Daniel fixed his gaze on God, indicating his focus and fervency (fervent from ferveo = to be hot, to glow. The idea is "pious ardor, animated zeal, warmth of devotion" - Webster 1828 - "When you pray, let it be with attention, with fervency, and with perseverance"). James says that "The effective ("**energetic**" from **energeo**) prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much." (Jas 5:16b). Young's literal says "very strong is a working supplication of a righteous man". **Would you characterize your praying as "energetic" or "lethargic"?**

Daniel's prayer was what saints of old like C H Spurgeon and Thomas Brooks would classify as '**importunate**' = Troublesomely urgent! Overly persistent in request or demand!

Thomas Brooks has some pithy comments on **fervency in prayer**...

To pray in a right manner, is to pray intensely, fervently, earnestly. So James 5:16, "The effectual prayer of a righteous man availeth much;" or, as the Greek has it, 'the working prayer,' that is, such prayer as sets the whole man a-work. The word signifies such a working as notes the liveliest activity that can be. As physic kills the body if it work not, so doeth prayer the soul. As a painted fire is no fire, a dead man is no man, so cold prayer is no prayer. In a painted fire, there is no heat. In a dead man, there is no life. In a cold prayer, there is no omnipotency, no devotion, and no blessing. Cold prayers are as arrows without heads, swords

without edges, birds without wings. They pierce not. They cut not. They fly not up to heaven. Cold prayers do always freeze before they get to heaven. So Jacob was earnest in his wrestling with God: "Let me alone," says God. "I will not let Thee go except Thou bless me," says Jacob (Ge 32:24, 25, 26, 27). Jacob, though lamed and had laid at, will not let the Lord go without a blessing. Jacob holds with his hands when his joints were out of joint, and so, as a prince, prevails with God. Jacob prays and weeps, and weeps and prays, and so prevails with God: Hosea 12:4, " Yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed: he wept and made supplication unto Him, etc. It is not the labour of the lips, but the travail of the heart.

**It is not the pouring forth of a flood of words,
but the pouring out of the soul,
that makes a man a prince, a prevailer with God.**

A man that would gain victory over God in prayer, must strain every string of his heart; he must, in beseeching God, besiege Him, and so "get the better of Him" he must strive in prayer even to an agony; he must be like importunate beggars, that will not be put off with frowns, or silence, or sad answers. Those that would be masters of their requests, must with the importunate widow press God so far as to put him to the blush ; they must with a holy impudence, as Basil speaks, make God ashamed to look them in the face, if he should deny the importunity of their souls. An importunate soul will never cease till he speed; he will devour all discouragements; yea, he will turn discouragements into encouragements, as the woman of Canaan did, till Christ says, ' Be unto thee, O soul, as thou wilt.'

**As a body without a soul,
much wood without fire,
a bullet in a gun without powder,
so are words in prayer
without fervency of spirit.**

The hottest springs send forth their waters by ebullitions. ([The Complete Works of Thomas Brooks - Volume 2](#))...

O, that Christians would chide themselves out of their cold prayers, and chide themselves into a better and warmer frame of spirit when they make their supplications to the Lord. An importunate soul in prayer is like a poor beggar that prays and knocks, that prays and waits, that prays and works, that knocks and knits, that begs and patches, and will not stir from the door till he hath an alms. An verily he that is good at this will not be long a beggar in grace. God will make his heart and his cup to overflow (Ed: As He did with Daniel!) ([The Complete Works of Thomas Brooks](#))

Jeremy Taylor ...

Easiness of desire is a great enemy to the success of a good man's prayer. It must be an intense, zealous, busy, operative prayer. For consider what a huge indecency it is that a man should speak to God for a thing that he values not. Our prayers upbraid our spirits when we beg tamely for those things for which we ought to die. Things which are more precious than imperial scepters. Richer than the spoils of the sea are the treasures of the Indian Hills. ([Prevailing Intercessory Prayer by D L Moody](#))

Related Resource -

- [Quotes To Motivate To Prayer. Or Prayer Provoking Prayer Quotes](#)
- [Pray Intensely. Fervently. Earnestly \(and Believingly. Assiduously. Sincerely\)](#)

Note that Daniel is praying toward **Adonai**, the Master, the sovereign God Who is in control and is the owner of everything.

What a contrast Daniel presents with the pagans who set their face toward idols (which are really "no gods" - Dt 32:17, Ps 106:37, 38-[note](#), 1Co 10:20, 2Chr 13:9, Je 2:11, Ac 19:26, Ga 4:8, 1Ti 4:1, Re 9:20-[note](#)) of wood and stone!

PROPER "POSTURE"

To set our face toward Adonai is a good posture and practice when we pray! How often I fumble through my prayers, half asleep, sadly unaware (and/or forgetful) that I am in the "Holy of holies", the very Throne room of the Living God (cp Heb 4:16-note), in His very presence during this intimate interval of time called "prayer"! Daniel's setting his face toward God is something akin to giving God "focused attention". **Is that the way I enter prayer?**

PRAYING

ACCORDING TO GOD'S WILL

Daniel demonstrates what it means to pray in accordance with God's will which provides an excellent Old Testament illustration of John's teaching in the New Testament...

And this is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything **according to His will**, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him. (1Jn 5:14,15)

Clearly to pray according to God's **Will** necessitates knowing God's **Word** for it is there that His will is most clearly revealed. Such man or woman, saturated with Scripture, then offers it back to God in prayer, not wavering or doubting. (cf Jas 1:5, 6-note, Jas 1:7, 8-note). As an aside, praying according to God's will is another great benefit of **Memorizing His Word** (see also **Memory Verses by Topic**-consider bookmarking to facilitate review). **You are regularly memorizing His Word aren't you?**

Whitcomb rightly comments that...

This is one of the truly great models for prayer in the Bible. It may even have set the pattern for the great prayers of Ezra (Ezra 9:6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15) and Nehemiah (Neh 9:5-38). Its greatness is not due to eloquence or length. We are not heard in heaven through "much speaking" or through "persuasive words of wisdom," but through a childlike faith-response to God's self-revelation in Scripture as we agree with His evaluation of us (i.e., confession) and lay claim upon His precious promises (Heb. 10:19-22; James 1:6; 1 John 1:9). (Whitcomb, J. Daniel Everyman's Bible Commentary)

Daniel prayed believing that God would answer him, for...

without **faith** it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must **believe** that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who **seek** Him. (He 11:6-note)

John MacArthur reminds us of the traits of this man Daniel...

we have seen him to be uncompromising, bold, full of faith, unselfish, humble, completely resistant to the world around him, persistent in his commitment..., holy, incorruptible, consistent in his living style, trustworthy, virtuous, obedient, worshipful.

[\(Elements of True Prayer, Part 1\)](#)

By prayer - (See **related Resources on Prayer** but be wary of the subtle "trap" of reading the resources and not actually praying!) The Hebrew word **tephillah** is derived from the verb **palal** (used in Da 9:4 "I prayed") and is the most frequent word used for prayer in the OT.

Tephillah - 72x in 67v in the OT and always rendered **prayer** or **prayers** in NAS (Note that most uses are in the psalms) -

2 Sam 7:27; 1 Kgs 8:28f, 38, 45, 49, 54; 9:3; 2 Kgs 19:4; 20:5; 2 Chr 6:19f, 29, 35, 39f; 7:12, 15; 30:27; 33:18f; Neh 1:6, 11; 11:17; Job 16:17; Ps 4:1; 6:9; 17:1; 35:13; 39:12; 42:8; 54:2; 55:1; 61:1; 65:2; 66:19f; 69:13; 72:20; 80:4; 84:8; 86:6; 88:2, 13; 102:1, 17; 109:4, 7; 141:2, 5; 143:1; Pr 15:8, 29; 28:9; Isa 1:15; 37:4; 38:5; 56:7; Jer 7:16; 11:14; Lam 3:8, 44; Dan 9:3, 17, 21; Jonah 2:7; Hab 3:1

D L Moody...

Those who have left the deepest impression on this sin-cursed earth have been men and women of prayer.

Lehman Strauss notes that...

There are three significant ninth chapters in the Old Testament, all of them containing a prayer of a similar nature: Ezra 9, Nehemiah 9, and Daniel 9. In each instance a servant of God was on his knees before the the Word of God, earnestly interceding for the people of God. The Old Testament prophets did not sit in a passive state waiting for a revelation from God through a dream, a vision, or a voice. They were "holy men of God" (2Pe 1:21-note) who spent much time in prayer, searching for the message and meaning of prophecy (1Pe 1:10, 11, 12-note). When the deep things of God baffled them they followed the only true course, that of asking God (Jas 1:5-note) and trusting the Holy Spirit to show them (1Co 2:9, 10, 11). Prayer and an understanding of God's Word are linked together. (The Prophecies of Daniel)

Guzik...

Daniel began his prayer where we all should - by recognizing the greatness and goodness of God. Sometimes we approach God as a stingy person who must be persuaded to give us something. But Daniel knew the problem was not with God. God keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him. Daniel's prayer is remarkable for both its understanding and earnestness. Many pray with understanding but not earnestness; others are earnest but have no understanding in prayer. The two together are a

powerful combination. "Oh! That our prayers could get beyond praying, till they got to agonizing." (Spurgeon)

Supplications (tachanun) - Note it is plural not singular. Supplication is a picturesque word which is related to the word "supple" meaning that which is easily bent or pliable. To supplicate (*sub-* under + *plico* = fold; another source says *supplicate* is derived from Latin *supplicare* = to beg on one's knees) means to beg, to entreat or to seek by earnest prayer and suggests a posture of humility. In short, to make **supplications** gives the picture of one begging on bended knee, a good posture when we are in the Throne Room, the "Holy of holies", the very presence of the majestic King!

Tachanun - 18x in 18v - 2 Chr 6:21; Job 41:3; Ps 28:2, 6; 31:22; 86:6; 116:1; 130:2; 140:6; 143:1; Pr 18:23; Jer 3:21; 31:9; Dan 9:3, 17, 18, 23; Zech 12:10. NAS = supplication(3), supplications(15). Note then that this Hebrew word is usually in the plural.

Daniel 9 gives rich instruction regarding prayer.

True prayer is...

(1) in response to the Word and grounded in God's will (Da 9:2)

(2) characterized by fervency (Da 9:3)

(3) characterized by self-denial (Da 9:4)

(4) identified unselfishly with God's people (Da 9:5)

(5) strengthened by confession (Da 9:5-15)

(6) dependent on God's character (Da 9:4,7,9,15)

(7) and has as its goal, God's glory (Da 9:16, 17, 18, 19).

(Adapted from John MacArthur's Study Bible).

With Fasting (tsom) is depriving the body of nourishment as an external act.

Pritchard quips that...

Fasting means to be so serious about prayer that you don't have time to eat...Does prayer make a difference with God? Yes, prayer makes a difference with God when prayer makes a difference with us. If you want your prayers to change things, let them first change you—your habits, your schedule, your priorities, your daily routine, and your inward focus. When that happens, your prayers will be like arrows that hit their target in heaven. ([The Positive Power of Prayer](#))

In some cases the purpose of the fast is to

(1) **Optimize one's ability to focus on God.** (Devotion)

(2) **A sign of sorrow or mourning.** (David when Jonathan and Saul died - 2Sa 1:12; 1Sa 1:6, 7,8 Hannah's barrenness) When Elijah condemned Ahab for Naboth's death, he mourned in sackcloth and fasted. God had mercy on him and delayed the punishment on his house (1Ki 21:27ff).

(3) **Before one made a critical decision** or pursued a potentially dangerous or difficult course of action (e.g., Es 4:16, Ne 1:4).

National fasting was called during times of extreme crisis, such a plague, a military threat, etc (2Chr 20:1, 2, 3, 4-29). **One wonders if it would not be appropriate for believers in America to begin to regularly (not ritualistically!) fast and pray for our country in light of the "plague" of evil that is overtaking our nation?** (cf. a solemn assembly in Joel 1:14, 2:15, cf. Jonah 3:5) National fasting was prescribed on certain days in Israel, the most prominent being the Day of Atonement (cf. Lev 16:29, 31; Lev 23:32).

FAKE FAST

By NT times fasting had become (as is too often the case with spiritual disciplines) for many "pious" Jews an external "ritual" (Lk 18:12). It is important to remember that fasting gains no "points" with God. We can never do enough to merit an audience with Him. Study Isaiah 58 for God's opinion of "external" fasting (Is 58:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14). And remember Jesus'

warnings and instructions regarding fasting (Note Jesus says not "if" you fast but "whenever" you fast! **While it is not a command, the implication seems clear that it is a discipline in which saints will engage. Are you as convicted as I am?** Mt 6:16, 17, 18-see discussion of fasting).

GENUINE FAST

...is to unloose the bonds of wickedness and sin

...shows that one is serious with God.

(Related resources: John Piper's book - [Hunger for God](#); [Sermons on Fasting](#))

Tsom - 26x in 22v - 2Sa 12:16; 1Kgs 21:9, 12; 2Chr 20:3; Ezra 8:21; Neh 9:1; Es 4:3; 9:31; Ps 35:13; 69:10; 109:24; Isa 58:3, 5, 6; Jer 36:6, 9; Da 9:3; Joel 1:14; 2:12, 15; Jonah 3:5; Zech 8:19

In his commentary on Daniel **Leupold** writes that...

Fasting and **sackcloth** and **ashes** are employed as auxiliary means to aid devotion. **Fasting** helps to keep the mind unencumbered and also reminds him who practices it that he has not deserved even food from God. To remove clothing and to substitute a **coarse wrap** strongly reminds the supplicant that not even the comforts of good clothing are his right and due reward. **Ashes** were put upon the head as a token of grief since Daniel sincerely grieved over his and his people's sins."

Sackcloth is the Hebrew noun saq - 46v - Ge 37:34; 42:25, 27, 35; Lev 11:32; Josh 9:4; 2 Sam 3:31; 21:10; 1 Kgs 20:31f; 21:27; 2 Kgs 6:30; 19:1f; 1 Chr 21:16; Neh 9:1; Esth 4:1ff; Job 16:15; Ps 30:11; 35:13; 69:11; Isa 3:24; 15:3; 20:2; 22:12; 37:1f; 50:3; 58:5; Jer 4:8; 6:26; 48:37; 49:3; Lam 2:10; Ezek 7:18; 27:31; Dan 9:3; Joel 1:8, 13; Amos 8:10; Jonah 3:5f, 8

Sackcloth and ashes - When ancients lamented, they would put on sackcloth and ashes as external manifestations of their sorrow and contrition ("*Contrite*" from *contero* = to break or bruise and thus literally means worn or bruised and hence brokenhearted over sin; deeply grieving for having offended a holy God). These **outward signs** were simply a reflection of the **inward state** of Daniel's broken heart.

How easy it is to turn "spiritual signs" such as **fasting, sackcloth and ashes** into a deceptive charade of empty formalism and ritualism. It is so much "easier" to put on "externals" ("sackcloth and ashes") of "**self made religion**" that make us look spiritual to others (and may even deceive us into thinking we are "spiritual" - see Col 2:16, 17-note, Col 2:18, 19-note, Col 2:20, 21, 22, 23-note), than to deal with "internals" (confession, repentance, brokenness) that lead to true, God pleasing spirituality.

David understood this important principle in his great psalm in which he dealt with his sin ("the internal") against God, leading him to affirm that...

Thou dost not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it; Thou art not pleased with burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise. (Psalm 51:16, Ps 51:17)

Spurgeon comments that David "was so illuminated as to see far beyond the symbolic ritual; his eye of faith gazed with delight upon the actual atonement.

Else would I give it. He would have been glad enough to present tens of thousands of victims if these would have met the case. Indeed, anything which the Lord prescribed he would cheerfully have rendered. We are ready to give up all we have if we may but be cleared of our sins; and when sin is pardoned our joyful gratitude is prepared for any sacrifice.

Thou delightest not in burnt offering. He knew that no form (**Ed**: or ritual) of burnt sacrifice was a satisfactory **propitiation**. (cf. [Atonement](#)) His deep soul need made him look from the type to the antitype, from the external rite to the inward grace.

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit. All sacrifices are presented to Thee in One, by the man whose broken heart presents the Saviour's merit to Thee. When the heart mourns for sin, Thou art better pleased than when the bullock bleeds beneath the axe. "**A broken heart**" is an expression implying deep sorrow, embittering the very life; it carries in it the idea of all but killing anguish in that region which is so vital as to be the very source of life (cf. heart - kardia). So excellent is a spirit humbled and mourning for sin, that it is not only a sacrifice, but it has a plurality of excellences (**Ed**: Note "sacrifices" is plural!), and is preeminently God's sacrifices ("of God").

A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

A heart crushed is a fragrant heart.

Men contemn (despise) those who are contemptible in their own eyes, but the Lord seeth not as man seeth (1Sa 16:7). He despises what men esteem, and values that which they despise (cf Lk 16:15). Never yet has God spurned a lowly, weeping penitent, and never will he while God is love, and while Jesus is called the man who receiveth sinners (Lk 15:2). Bullocks and rams He desires not, but contrite hearts He seeks after; yea, but one of them is better to Him than all the varied offerings of the old Jewish sanctuary. (**Ed**: And how true this proved to be in the case of His servant Daniel who was "highly esteemed" - Da 9:23!)

Sammy Tippit writes that...

One of the most powerful men of prayer in the Christian church was [George Müller](#). He housed, clothed, and fed thousands of orphans solely through prayer. He provided financial support to the ministry of [J. Hudson Taylor](#) through the means of prayer. Mueller once stated that he believed that God had given him more than thirty thousand souls in answer to prayer. Mueller's principles of prayer were very specific. He wrote:

There are five conditions (of prayer) which I always endeavor to fulfill, in observing which I have the assurance of answer to prayer:

1."I have not the least doubt because I am assured that it is the Lord's will to save them, for He willeth that all men should be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth" (1Tim.2:4)

2."I have never pleaded for their salvation in my own name, but in the blessed name of my precious Lord Jesus, and on His merits alone (John 1:14).

3."I always firmly believed in the willingness of God to hear my prayers (Mark 11:24).

4."I am not conscious of having yielded to any sin, for 'if I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me' when I call (Ps.66:18).

5."I have persevered in believing prayer for more than 52 years for some, and shall continue till the answer comes: 'Shall not God avenge his own elect which cry day and night unto him' " (Luke 18:7).

The secret to the prayer life of Mr. Mueller shines forth as a golden ray of sunlight. He prayed from the heart of Jesus to the glory of Jesus. His praying, from beginning to ending, was rooted in the life of Christ. His principles of effective praying had no seeds of self-motivation to self-glory. He planted his prayer life in Christ alone. (**Sammy Tippit - Worthy of Worship - Chapter 9 - The Nature of Prayer that Results in True Worship**)

Rishel has some interesting remarks on **fasting** noting that...

there is only one motivation that can be the proper basis for religious fasting. That motive is simply to humble yourself before God (Isaiah 58; Joel 2:12; Psalm 35:13; 69:10; Ezra 8:21; Daniel 9:3; Nehemiah 9:1–2). Conversely it can be said from the multitude of scriptural examples that a true desire to humble yourself before God ought to result in a life characterized by prayer and fasting. This motivation to humble yourself before God contains two aspects. First, humbling yourself involves confession and repentance of sin. Second, the requirement that it be done before God implies seeking God's face to know him and to discern his will.

Humble Yourself...it should be noted how integral repentance and humility are with the biblical accounts of fasting. The Israelites fasted and put away false gods (1Samuel 7:6). David fasted when he repented of his sin (2Samuel 12:16, 21, 22, 23). Ahab fasted and repented after causing Naboth's death (1Kings 21:27). Upon hearing God's Word, Israel fasted, confessing their sin (Nehemiah 9:1, 2, 3). Daniel fasted and repented for himself and the people for not having walked in the laws of the Lord (Daniel 9:3). Joel called for a fast because of the Lord's chastening (Joel 1:14; 2:12, 15). The people of Nineveh repented in fasting (Jonah 3:5). And David humbled himself before God in fasting (Psalm 69:10, 11, 12, 13). On into the New Testament, Paul fasted in Acts 27:9 in keeping with the fast of the Day of Atonement. And Cornelius fasted because he humbled himself before God (Acts 10:2-30).

Samuel Miller stated

Fasting is a natural and significant expression of our penitence for sin. .. as an acknowledgment of our entire dependence on him for all our comforts, and also of our utter unworthiness of them as sinners."8

This could be referred to as the natural ground of fasting: One who is under deep affliction, overwhelmed with sorrow for sin, and has a strong apprehension of the wrath of God. In short, fasting is utilized as a means to humble yourself and avert God's wrath.

This is exactly the language used to prescribe fasting on the Day of Atonement: "You shall afflict your souls" (Leviticus 16:29, 30, 31; 23:27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32; Nu 27:9). And yet this is exactly what is neglected today—humbleness of heart, repentance of sin, and confession before God. It is this fasting of the soul, characterized by humility, that is the first aspect of the proper motive to fast.

This is identical to the attitude of the early church fathers toward fasting. "First of all, be on your guard against every evil word, and every evil desire, and purify your heart from all the vanities of this world. If you guard against these things, your fasting will be perfect."⁹ "Fasting of the body is hunger for nourishment and the avoidance of food.. .. Fasting of the soul is hunger and thirst for righteousness and avoiding evil deeds and thoughts."¹⁰ And also:

Let us not believe that the external fast from visible food alone can possibly be sufficient for perfection of heart and purity of body unless it is united with a fast of the soul. For the soul also has foods, which are harmful: slander, anger, envy, vainglory, lust. If then, with all the powers we have, we abstain from these in a most holy fast, our observance of the bodily fast will be both useful and profitable. For labor of the flesh, when joined with contrition of the spirit, will produce a sacrifice that is most acceptable to God, and a worthy shrine of holiness in the pure and undefiled inmost chambers of the heart. But if, while fasting as far as the body is concerned, we are entangled in the most dangerous vices of the soul, our humiliation of the flesh will do us no good whatever, while the most precious part of us is defiled.. .. For it is the clean heart which is made a shrine of God and a temple of the Holy Spirit. (St. John Cassian Institutes 5:21, "Fasting in the Writing of the Church Fathers," Coptic Church Review, 6:3 Fall 1985, 80.)

Not only has humility been closely associated with the fasting of the apostles and the early church fathers, but it was also the hallmark of fasting in American church history. The day before the Pilgrims left the Mayflower, they held a day of fasting and prayer. William Bradford quotes a Pilgrim father from the early 1630s in his book, *Of Plymouth Plantation*: "I proclaimed a fast that we might humble ourselves before God, and seek of him a right way for us." Then Bradford documents that on November 15, 1636, a law was passed which allowed the governor to "command solemn days of humiliation by fasting, etc. and also for thanksgiving as occasion shall be offered."

Fasting did not stop with the Pilgrim fathers, nor did its association with humility. The House of Burgesses of Virginia declared a day of "fasting, humiliation, and prayer" on June 1, 1774, on occasion of the embargo on the port of Boston. John Adams declared May 9, 1798, as a day of "solemn humiliation, fasting and prayer" on the verge of war with France. James Madison declared January 12, 1815, as "a day of public humiliation, fasting and prayer." Zachary Taylor declared August 3, 1849, as a day of national fasting, on which occasion E. D. MacMaster said:

First of all, doubtless, our duty is that we call to recollection each one his own personal sins, and with deep humiliation and confession of them before God, turn from them, imploring him in his divine mercy to pardon us. It is also our duty to call to remembrance and confess before God the sins of our people and nation, and to make intercession and supplication for their pardon at the throne of grace.

During the Civil War Abraham Lincoln declared three fasts: August 30, 1863; the last Thursday in September of 1863; and the first Thursday in August of 1864. Each of these was specified as a day of "public humiliation, fasting and prayer."¹⁴ On the first of these fast days, Charles S. Porter preached a sermon in Philadelphia in which he stated:

"The present National Fast implies, that somehow things are not right with us, and that it is our duty, so far as possible, to set them right."

He then listed three duties imposed by the fast: (1) Recognize God's Lordship and our place under his sovereignty. (2) Recognize the duty to our Country. (3) Withstand and forestall the demoralizing influences of war. (Rev. Charles S. Porter, *Sermon: A Fast Implies a Duty Philadelphia: C. Sherman Son & Co., 1863, 7–12*)

In light of the above information, Samuel Miller concludes that the main reason such a duty is necessary is the presence of sin and the depravity of human nature. To see sin as it really is, in all of its horrible evil and filth, will assuredly result in penitence and fasting.¹⁶ The depravity of human nature has not changed from the Old Testament to the New Testament, in the early church, or throughout history. The reason there is very little fasting today is because the sinfulness of the human heart has been neglected or explained away. Today there is precious little humbleness of heart, so it should come as no surprise that very few Christians spend time fasting.

But **God is calling us to a humbleness of heart that manifests itself in fasting and prayer.** If it should seem that abstaining from food is too radical or extreme, we must be reminded that the sinfulness of our hearts is radically heinous, deeply rooted, and horribly deceptive. ([Why God's People Should Fast](#))

Daniel 9:4 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,

- **Confessed:** Da 9:5-12 Lev 26:40, 41, 42 1Ki 8:47, 48, 49 2Ch 7:14 Ne 9:2,3 Ps 32:5 Jer 3:13 1Jn 1:8, 9, 10
- **the great:** Ex 20:6 34:6,7 Nu 14:18,19 Dt 5:10 7:9 1Ki 8:23 Ne 1:5 9:32 Jer 32:17, 18, 19 Mic 7:18, 19, 20 Na 1:2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 Lk 1:72 Ro 8:28 Jas 1:12 Jas 2:5 1Jn 5:2,3
- [Daniel 9 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Da 9:4-15 Confession

Da 9:16-19 Petition

Prayer is a response to the Word of God! At least it should be. The most efficacious prayers are those that pray God's Word back to Him. He is not bored, nor uninterested in hearing His Word in intercession. It was when Daniel perceived from the Word what God had in store for His people that he began to commune with God. Being a **Scripture saturated man**, Daniel may have been aware of the similar truths in the following passages, all of which deal with prayer under "duress"...

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— 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, 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 (Note: This is a reference to the unconditional Abrahamic Covenant - see **Covenant: Abrahamic versus Mosaic**). (Lev 26:40, 41, 42)

(King Solomon prayed) **If they take thought in the land where they have been taken captive** (Eg, Daniel in Babylon), **and repent and make supplication to You in the land of those who have taken them captive, saying, 'We have sinned and have committed iniquity, we have acted wickedly'**; if they return to You with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their enemies who have taken them captive, and pray to You toward their land which You have given to their fathers, the city which You have chosen, and the house which I have built for Your name; then hear their prayer and their supplication in heaven Your dwelling place, and maintain their cause (1 Ki 8:47, 48, 49) (**Note:** The fact that God heard Daniel's prayer is an answer to Solomon's prayer).

If I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or if I command the locust to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among My people, and My people who are called by My name **humble** themselves and **pray** and **seek** My face and **turn** from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and will heal their land. (2Chr 7:13, 14)

I prayed - Note well - he didn't read and study about prayer, ask others to pray or contemplate the great value of prayer. He prayed. How often I have fallen into the subtle trap of listening to a great sermon on prayer and being deeply moved by the speaker's words...and yet, sadly failed to put those words (and emotions) into actions and actually pray. Prayer for me is very hard work beloved, so this section of Daniel is very convicting! **My prayer is that the study of Daniel's prayer in chapter 9 changes my prayer life and yours for our good and His glory! Amen.**

The Hebrew word for **prayed** (**palal**) is most often used to describe intercessory prayer. To **intercede** is derived from root words which combined give the literal meaning of to move or pass between and thus to mediate, to act between parties with a view to reconcile those who differ or contend.

The old Maranatha chorus below could well reflect Daniel's heart attitude as he entered into this sacred moment with His Lord..[Hide Me In Your Holiness](#) (close your eyes and ponder this beautiful chorus as you ask Him to give you a heart for prayer like His highly esteemed servant Daniel.)

Hide me, LORD, in Your holiness
Every sin I now confess
Praise to You, forgiving LORD
Hide me in Your holiness
Hide me in Your holiness.

To the LORD - Jehovah ~ God's Covenant Keeping Name - This Name of God is used only in Daniel 9.

My God - Elohim ~ Creator God

Confessed - The Hebrew word **yadah** conveys the primary sense of acknowledging or confessing sin, God's character and works,

or man's character. The first use is found in Ge 29:35 where it is actually translated "**praise**". It is in this latter sense that Daniel uses this "confession" -- that it might be an offering of praise to Jehovah. This is always a good way to begin our prayer to the "great and awesome" God!

As an aside **confession** of sin is more than a mere acknowledgment of sin in the life. It is an agreeing with God as to all the implications that enter into the fact that one has sinned. It is looking at sin from God's point of view, and acting accordingly. It means the putting away of that sin. It means the determination to be done with that sin. This man sees sin the way God does and agrees with God. He hates sin, he is sorry for sin, he turns and flees from known sin. When sin is pointed out in his life he does not bristle with self-righteousness; he confesses, admits, repents.

Lehman Strauss makes several excellent practical points regarding why the highly esteemed Daniel would so readily confess sin...

This is the language of a soul occupied with God (Da 9:4 "great and awesome God", Da 9:7 "Righteousness belongs to You"; Da 9:9 "compassion and forgiveness"; Da 9:14 "the LORD our God is righteous"): Who and what God is. Prayer is the occupation of the soul with its needs; worship is the occupation of the soul with God, and yet the two are inseparably linked together. This explains, in part at least, why this purest of men is confessing sin.

As Daniel meditated upon the glories and perfection of Jehovah, his own heart became blacker against the pure, spotless, white background of a holy God. No man can have a true concept of himself until he draws near to God.

Isaiah testified,

"I saw also the Lord.... Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts" (Isaiah 6:1, 5).

When we see God for what He is, and our own hearts for what they are, we are uncomplaining because we know then that whatever God's dealings with us might be, they are just.

Here is a prayer which might well be read frequently by us all if we want God's blessing in a sinful and sorrowful world.

O, how we need to examine our thoughts and search our hearts as regards the cause and contents of our prayers! (The Prophecies of Daniel)

Alas - KJV has "O". **Alas** (from *a* = *ah* + *las* = weary) is used to express unhappiness, pity, or concern and the 1828 Webster's entry defines **alas** as....

An exclamation expressive of sorrow, grief, pity, concern, or apprehension of evil; sometimes followed by day or while; alas the day, like alack a day; or alas the while, (Obs. Spenser.) expressing an unhappy time.

O Lord - Remember that in the NAS when "LORD" is all capital letters, it signifies the Hebrew name **Jehovah (study)**. Here the word Lord signifies **Adonai** (See study of **Adonai - Lord, Master**), the essence of that name being one who is the owner or the master and thus the one who has all rights to do as he pleases. This of course is a perfect description in the context for the perfectly righteous God is perfectly justified in bringing desolation on Jerusalem and exile for His chosen people because of their unfaithfulness.

Adonai - Used in 10 verses in Daniel and all except one are found in the great prayer of Daniel 9 - Da 1:2, Da 9:4 9:7 9:8 9:9 9:15 9:16 9:17 9:19. Clearly Daniel desires to emphasize God's Lordship and His sovereignty over Israel. Thus each use of this name is in essence an acknowledgement and an appeal to God's attribute of sovereignty, to the fact that He is in total and complete control. When we encounter difficulty in dealing with a business, don't we all tend to say something like "I want to speak to the owner!". Why? Because we know he is the one who has the authority to take action. And so Daniel addresses the "Owner" of heaven and earth, Adonai, Who alone can answer Daniel's petitions in the latter part of the prayer.

Awesome (yare') means primarily to be afraid, to fear, and in this context to revere (See [preceding notes on "fear of Jehovah"](#)). While to **revere** does not picture a "shaking fear", God's children do well to not downplay the fact that reverence of the thrice holy God does in fact have at least some degree of "holy shaking". And do we not see this in the Bible, for most men who saw God had a sense of fear and were thus often on their face! (cf. the actions of the following saints - **Isaiah**: Isa 6:5-note, **Ezekiel**: Eze 1:28 **Job**: Job 42:6 **Joshua**: Jos 5:13,14 **Paul**: Ac 9:3, 4, Ac 9:5 **John**: Rev 1:17-note, **Twenty four elders**: Re 4:10-note, Re 5:8-note, **Angels**: Re 7:11-note) We dare not minimize this element of reverence, for holy fear serves as a powerful impediment to commission of sin.

This same noun **yare'** is used twice in Dt 28 where Moses warned Israel...

If you are not careful to observe all the words of this law which are written in this book, to **fear (yare')** this honored and **awesome** (yare') name, **Jehovah** your God, then **Jehovah** will bring extraordinary plagues on you and your descendants, even severe and lasting plagues, and miserable and chronic sicknesses. (Dt 28:58, 59)

Although **Daniel** did not have access to the passage in first John, he did understand the principle that...

This is the confidence (boldness) which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will (The key - So if it is in His Word as in Jeremiah 25), He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him. (1Jn 5:14, 15)

Comment: This conditional promise by God is one which undergirds the oft quoted phrase "Claim the promises of God". Notice the condition that assures reception is prayer in accord with His **Will** (best identified in His **Word**). We see a parallel truth in Psalm 37:4 ([note](#)) where clearly in context "delight" in Jehovah is associated with trusting and obeying Him. As we grow in our spiritual walk with Him, our "desires" become (or should become) more and more in synch with His desires (will), which is good and acceptable and perfect (Ro 12:2b-note). As **Spurgeon** says in his comments on Ps 37:4...

A pleasant duty (delight yourself in Jehovah) is here rewarded with another pleasure (desires of your heart). Men who delight in God desire or ask for nothing but what will please God; hence it is safe to give them **carte blanche**. Their will is subdued to God's will, and now they may have what they will. Our innermost desires are here meant, not our casual wishes; there are many things which **nature** might desire which **grace** would never permit us to ask for; these deep, prayerful, asking desires are those to which the promise is made.

The *desires* of God, and the *desires* of the righteous, agree in one; they are of one mind in their desires. (John Bunyan)

Who keeps His covenant and lovingkindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments (cf Ex 20:6, 34:6, 7, Dt 5:10, 7:9, 10) - Notice that in this context love of God is not as much an emotion as it is an action or a behavior (cf Jn 14:15, 21, 23, 24) This same truth about God also served as the foundation for Nehemiah's prayer (see Neh 1:5, 6, 7, 8,9, 10, 11). And thus Daniel acknowledges that God is a covenant keeping God. This reference is clearly to the conditional Mosaic Covenant which included blessing for obedience and cursing for disobedience. At Mount Sinai Israel entered into this covenant with Jehovah as recorded in Exodus 24...

Then he took the book of the covenant and read it in the hearing of the people; and they said, **'All that the LORD has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient!'** So Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the people, and said, "Behold the blood of the covenant (speaks of the solemn, binding nature of the covenant), which the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words." (Ex 24:7, 8)

Disobedience of the Chosen People forced the perfectly just and righteous God to keep His covenant promise to **'curse'** His people, which is why the 10 northern tribes ("Israel") were taken captive into Assyria in 722BC and why the 2 southern tribes ("Judah") were now in exile in Babylon.

Lovingkindness (hesed) is found only in Daniel 1:9 and Daniel 9:5 but is found some 241 times in the OT.

God's **lovingkindness (hesed)** is offered to His people, who need redemption from sin, enemies, and troubles. **Hesed** means loyal, steadfast, or faithful love and stresses the idea of a belonging together of those involved in the love relationship. In the OT, communion, deliverance (Ps 136:12), enabling, enlightenment, guidance, forgiveness, hope, praise, preservation are all based on God's hesed. A recurrent refrain describing God's nature is "abounding in hesed" (Ex 34:6; Neh 9:17; Ps 103:8; Jonah 4:2). Thus hesed is one of the most important words in the OT, and is often translated in the KJV as "lovingkindness" or "mercy". **Hesed** indicates faithfulness to a relationship. To show kindness or **hesed** is to act in a loyal, loving way to a person. This is true of kindness in human relationships and of the kindness God shows us. Read 2Sa 9:1-13 ("kindness" in 2Sa 9:1 = hesed) for the beautiful example of David showing "hesed" to crippled Mephibosheth, the surviving son of Jonathan with whom David had a covenant relationship (See study of **Mephibosheth**). God's **hesed** denotes persistent and unconditional tenderness, kindness, and mercy. **Hesed** is central to God's character and is closely tied to His covenant with His Chosen people (see Covenant: Summary Table); in fact the covenant may be thought of as the relationship from which the **hesed** flows. However, God's **hesed** is not bound by the covenant itself, and though men may prove unfaithful to this relationship, God's **hesed** is everlasting (Isa 54:8). In general, one may identify three basic meanings of **hesed**, and these 3 meanings always interact: "Strength," "steadfastness," and "love." Any understanding of **hesed** that fails to suggest all three inevitably loses some of its richness. "Love" by itself easily becomes

sentimentalized or universalized apart from the covenant. Yet "strength" or "steadfastness" suggests only the fulfillment of a legal obligation. **Hesed** refers primarily to mutual and reciprocal rights and obligations between the parties of a relationship (especially Jehovah and Israel). But **hesed** is not only a matter of obligation; it is also a matter of generosity. It is not only a matter of loyalty, but also a matter of mercy. **Hesed** implies personal involvement and commitment in a relationship beyond the rule of law. "Devotion" is a single word which captures the essence of the **hesed**. The RSV attempts to bring this out by its translation, "steadfast love." Biblical usage frequently speaks of someone "doing," "showing," or "keeping" **hesed**. The concrete content of the word is especially evident when it is used in the plural. God's "**mercies**," "**kindnesses**," or "**faithfulnesses**" are His specific, concrete acts of redemption in fulfillment of His promise. An example appears in Isa 55:3: "And I will make an everlasting covenant with you, according to the faithful mercies (hesed) shown to David".

In summary, **hesed** reflects God's loyalty and faithfulness to His covenant, the devoted love promised within a covenant, the love that is willing to commit itself to another by making its promise a matter of solemn record. God's hesed is **everlasting** (this phrase is repeated 26x in Psalm 136-[note](#)) **Spurgeon** commenting on Jehovah's **everlasting hesed** in Ps 136 writes...

It is the sweetest stanza that a man can sing. What joy that there is mercy, mercy with Jehovah, enduring mercy, mercy enduring for ever. We are ever needing it, trying it, praying for it, receiving it: therefore let us for ever sing of it.

When all else is changing within and around,
In God and His mercy no change can be found.

Hesed - 239v in the NAS -

Ge 19:19; 20:13; 21:23; 24:12, 14, 27, 49; 32:10; 39:21; 40:14; 47:29; Exod 15:13; 20:6; 34:6f; Num 14:18f; Deut 5:10; 7:9, 12; Josh 2:12, 14; Judg 1:24; 8:35; Ruth 1:8; 2:20; 3:10; 1 Sam 15:6; 20:8, 14f; 2 Sam 2:5f; 3:8; 7:15; 9:1, 3, 7; 10:2; 15:20; 16:17; 22:51; 1 Kgs 2:7; 3:6; 8:23; 20:31; 1 Chr 16:34, 41; 17:13; 19:2; 2 Chr 1:8; 5:13; 6:14, 42; 7:3, 6; 20:21; 24:22; 32:32; 35:26; Ezra 3:11; 7:28; 9:9; Neh 1:5; 9:17, 32; 13:14, 22; Esth 2:9, 17; Job 6:14; 10:12; 37:13; Ps 5:7; 6:4; 13:5; 17:7; 18:50; 21:7; 23:6; 25:6f, 10; 26:3; 31:7, 16, 21; 32:10; 33:5, 18, 22; 36:5, 7, 10; 40:10f; 42:8; 44:26; 48:9; 51:1; 52:1, 8; 57:3, 10; 59:10, 16f; 61:7; 62:12; 63:3; 66:20; 69:13, 16; 77:8; 85:7, 10; 86:5, 13, 15; 88:11; 89:1f, 14, 24, 28, 33, 49; 90:14; 92:2; 94:18; 98:3; 100:5; 101:1; 103:4, 8, 11, 17; 106:1, 7, 45; 107:1, 8, 15, 21, 31, 43; 108:4; 109:12, 16, 21, 26; 115:1; 117:2; 118:1ff, 29; 119:41, 64, 76, 88, 124, 149, 159; 130:7; 136:1ff; 138:2, 8; 141:5; 143:8, 12; 144:2; 145:8; 147:11; Prov 3:3; 11:17; 14:22; 16:6; 19:22; 20:6, 28; 21:21; 31:26; Isa 16:5; 40:6; 54:8, 10; 55:3; 57:1; 63:7; Jer 2:2; 9:24; 16:5; 31:3; 32:18; 33:11; Lam 3:22, 32; Dan 1:9; 9:4; Hos 2:19; 4:1; 6:4, 6; 10:12; 12:6; Joel 2:13; Jonah 2:8; 4:2; Mic 6:8; 7:18, 20; Zech 7:9

Hesed is translated as follows in the NAS - Deeds of devotion(2), devotion(1), devout(1), faithfulness(1), favor(2), good(1), kindly(7), kindness(32), kindnesses(1), loveliness(1), lovingkindness(176), lovingkindnesses(7), loyal deeds(1), loyalty(6), mercies(1), merciful(2), mercy(1), righteousness(1), unchanging love(2).

Daniel 9:5 we have sinned, committed iniquity, acted wickedly and rebelled, even turning aside from Your commandments and ordinances.

- **have sinned:** Da 9:15 1Ki 8:47, 48, 49, 50 2Ch 6:37, 38, 39 Ezr 9:6 Ne 1:6, 7, 8 9:33,34 Ps 106:6 Isa 64:5, 6, 7 Jer 3:25 14:7
- **Turning from:** Ps 18:21 119:102 Isa 59:13 Eze 6:9 Ho 1:2 Mal 3:7 Heb 3:12)

We (cf Da 9:20) - Daniel includes himself as a sinner even though God considers him as one of the most righteous men in the Old Testament, along with Noah and Job (Ezek 14:20). There is an important principle in this passage - the greater one's knowledge of and intimacy with God, the deeper will be one's commitment and the more overwhelmed one will be with their own sense of sinfulness. We see this dynamic in Paul as he grew in the knowledge of God and the Lord Jesus Christ (compare approximate date with Paul's changing "self estimate")...

55AD -- For I am the least of the apostles, who am **not fit to be called an apostle** because I persecuted the church of God. (1Co 15:9)

61AD -- To me, **the very least of all saints**, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ, (Ep 3:8)

63-66AD -- It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save **sinners**, among whom **I am foremost of all**. (1Ti 1:15)

Guzik...

This is a confession of we, not they. In this sense, they prayers never really reach God; genuine we prayers see self correctly and see our fellow saints with compassion. Daniel's confession of sin might seem phony until we realize how passionately and completely he is focused on God. Compared to God, even the most righteous among us falls far short. "I firmly believe that, the better a man's own character becomes, and the more joy in the Lord he has in his own heart, the more capable is he of sympathetic sorrow; and, probably, the more of it he will have. If thou hast room in thy soul for sacred joy, thou hast equal room for holy grief." (Spurgeon)

Daniel continues to use the pronoun "we" and "us" throughout this section on confession of sins providing a model for any who would seek to intercede for their country. How easy it would have been to blame the present plight of Judah on some of the ungodly kings that had led Judah. But he did not seek to blame, but to contrary was willing to shoulder the blame! **I need to remember and emulate Daniel's pattern of prayer, instead of blaming ungodly leaders for the plight of America.**

CONFESSION OF ALL MANNER OF SIN

Daniel uses 5 pictures of sinful behavior (cf 3 pictures in 1Ki 8:47, Ps 106:6) for his desire is to fully confess sin of every kind. He wanted to be certain that nothing impeded his communication with God. Whether Daniel had access to the following Scriptures is uncertain, but he definitely understood the principle that to come to God with unconfessed sin that remains unconfessed is to put a veritable "lid" on heaven...

Psalm 66:18 If I regard wickedness in my heart, the Lord will not hear;

Spurgeon: If I regard iniquity in my heart. If, having seen it to be there, I continue to gaze upon it without aversion; if I cherish it, have a side glance of love toward it, excuse it, and palliate it;

The Lord will not hear me. How can he? Can I desire him to connive at my sin, and accept me while I wilfully cling to any evil way? Nothing hinders prayer like iniquity harboured in the breast; as with Cain, so with us, sin lieth at the door, and blocks the passage. If thou listen to the devil, God will not listen to thee. If you refuse to hear God's commands, he will surely refuse to hear thy prayers. An imperfect petition God will hear for Christ's sake, but not one which is wilfully miswritten by a traitor's hand. For God to accept our devotions, while we are delighting in sin, would be to make himself the God of hypocrites, which is a fitter name for Satan than for the Holy One of Israel.

Proverbs 15:29 The LORD is far from the wicked, but He hears the **prayer** of the righteous.

Proverbs 28:9 He who turns away his ear from listening to the law, even his **prayer** is an abomination.

Sinned (chata) (in Da 9:5, 8, 11, 15) means to miss the way or the mark. The literal sense of chata is found in Judges where we read of the 700 choice Benjamite men who "were left-handed" and "each one could sling a stone at a hair and not **miss (chata)**." (Jdg 20:16)

Israel forgot GOD
Israel forgot God's LAW
Israel made up NEW gods
Israel made up NEW LAWS

The application to the modern church in America is clear - Preach (aorist imperative - conveys a sense of urgency for our country) **the Word** (not long stories, but His pure Word) whether it is popular or not, whether it is convenient or not, in season and out of season (2Ti 4:2-note, 2Ti 4:3,4-note), while the day is still call day for the night comes when no man can work! (Jn 9:4)

Committed iniquity ('avah/'avon) strictly means to bend, twist, distort and here is used in a figurative sense of "bending" God's law. This is the verb used by David himself in Ps 51:2a as he confesses his infidelity and his subsequent murder of Uriah and asks God to wash him from his "**iniquity**".

Act wickedly (rasha' - also in Da 9:15, 11:32, 12:10) means to be wrong, to violate. **Rasha'** describes a misdeed, as when King Jehoshaphat tolerated an alliance with evil King Ahaziah, causing God to destroy his ships as a sign of His displeasure (2Chr 20:35, 36, 37).

Rebelled (marad - also in Da 9:9) means to oppose or disobey one in authority or control. Webster says that to rebel is to express

open resistance against authority. **Marad** was used by Joshua and Caleb as they urged Israel to accept their report that the land of Canaan was "an exceedingly good land" (Nu 14:7 and not to "**rebel** against the LORD" (Nu 14:9). The essence of rebellion was a shrinking back in unbelief and a denial of God's word, preferring one's own notions of what is right. In this use of marad in Numbers, God Israel's rebellion by shutting them out of Canaan for the next 40 years.

Turning aside (cur/sur - also in Da 9:11) literally means to physically turn aside (eg, Moses Ex 3:3, 4) but here is used figuratively to describe God's people turning away from His **commandments and ordinances**. In short, Israel committed apostasy which was exemplified in Judges where we read this summary statement...

Yet they did not listen to their judges, for they played the harlot after other gods and bowed themselves down to them. They **turned aside** (cur/sur) quickly from the way in which their fathers had walked in obeying the commandments of the Lord; they did not do as their fathers. (Jdg 2:17)

Warren Wiersbe makes an interesting observation regarding the solitary prayer of Daniel (no prayer meeting as we saw in Daniel 2 - not sure why not)...

Several times in Israel's ministry, the intercession of one person brought about the nation's deliverance from judgment. On two occasions, God was ready to wipe out the entire Jewish nation, but the intercession of Moses stayed His hand (Ex 32:7-14; Nu 14:10-25). God answered Elijah's prayer and sent the rain that was so desperately needed (1Ki 18:35, 36, 37, 38, 39, See also James 5:17, 18, 19), and He heard Jehoshaphat's prayer and gave Israel victory over the large invading army of Moabites and Ammonites (2Chr 20:6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17). King Hezekiah cried out to God when the Assyrian army surrounded Jerusalem, and the Lord sent His angel to slay 185,000 enemy soldiers (Is 37:14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20; 2Ki 19:15, 16, 17, 18, 19). "The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective" (Jas 5:16NIV). God doesn't have to wait for the entire nation to repent and cry out for mercy; He will start to work when He hears the believing prayers of one faithful intercessor. (Bible Exposition Commentary - Old Testament) **Are you that one man or one woman who will begin to intercede for the glory of God's Name in "Christian" America?**

Ray Pritchard agrees with Wiersbe writing that...

The good news in all this is that the prayer of a righteous person can change a life, a home, a marriage, a church, a school, a community, a company, a city, and an entire nation. As Abraham discovered in Genesis 18, only ten righteous men could have saved Sodom. A few righteous men and women who go to their knees can change their world. ([The Positive Power of Prayer](#))

Daniel 9:6 "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.

- **We have not:** Da 9:10 Jer 26:5 Zec 1:4, 5, 6 Zec 7:8, 9, 10, 11, 12 Mt 21:34-40 23:37 Lk 20:10, 11, 12 Ac 7:51,52 13:27 1Th 2:15,16
- **our kings:** Ezra 9:7 Ne 9:32,34
- [Daniel 9 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Moreover - In the face of Judah's many "varieties" of sin, in His great compassion, God sent His servants the prophets who warned everyone from the king down to the pauper (2Ki 17:13, 14, cf 2Chr 36:14, 15, 16). All of Judah doubtless heard the words of the prophets and yet they repeatedly refused to heed the warnings and repent.

To our kings (see King Manasseh - 2Chr 33:10). Jeremiah records that Jerusalem would be "removed from before" God's face...

because of all the evil of the sons of Israel and the sons of Judah, which they have done to provoke Me to anger-- they, their **kings**, their **leaders**, their **priests**, their **prophets**, the **men of Judah**, and the **inhabitants of Jerusalem**. "And **they have turned their back to Me, and not their face**; though I taught them, teaching again and again, **they would not listen and receive instruction**. (Jer 32:32,33, cf Je 44:4, 5, 16)

All the people of the land (see Is 30:10, 11). Compare Jeremiah's almost incredible record of Judah's steadfast refusal to listen to God ...

Thus says the LORD, "Stand by the ways and see and ask for the ancient paths, Where the good way is, and walk in it; And you shall find rest for your souls. But they said, '**We will not walk in it.**' "And I set watchmen over you, saying, 'Listen to the sound of the trumpet!' But they said, '**We will not listen.**' 18 "Therefore hear, O

nations, And know, O congregation, what is among them. 19 "Hear, O earth: behold, I am bringing disaster on this people, the fruit of their plans, because **they have not listened to My words**, And as for **My law, they have rejected it also**. (Jer 6:16, 17, 18, 19, cf Je 7:13, 25, 26, 25:3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 29:19)

Not listened (KJV = hearkened) is the Hebrew word **shama** used over 1000x in the OT and in over 80 passages conveys the idea of hearing with attention or intent to obey.

Shama is used 7 times in Daniel's prayer! Four times in the **confession section** - Da 9:6; Da 9:10 = "nor have we obeyed"; Da 9:11 = "not obeying"; Da 9:14 "we have not obeyed" Three times in the **petition section** pleading with God to listen even though Judah refused to listen! See Da 9:17 "listen"; Da 9:18 = "Hear"; Da 9:19 = "Hear".

In short, **we have not listened** means that Judah **had not obeyed** the repeated (gracious) warnings of God's **servants the prophets** to turn to Him. Here is one of the more striking divine indictments regarding not listening (note what followed "not listening"!)

Yet the LORD warned Israel and Judah, through all His prophets and every seer, saying, "**Turn from your evil ways** (Note: Another way of saying "Repent!") and keep My commandments, My statutes according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you through My servants the prophets." However, **they did not listen**, but **stiffened their neck** like their fathers, who **did not believe** in the LORD their God. (2Ki 17:13, 14)

Some of the most tragic (and frightening) words in the Old Testament are found in the description of Judah's deportation to Babylon where we read...

And the LORD, the God of their fathers, sent word to them again and again by His messengers (cf His "**servants the prophets**"), (Why did he keep sending them?) because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place (The Temple which functioned as His "habitation" as manifest by the Shekinah Glory) but they continually **mocked** the messengers of God, **despised** His words and **scoffed** at His prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against His people, **until there was no remedy**. (Remedy = Hebrew = **marpe'** [related to "**rapha**" = to heal, cf **Jehovah Rapha**] Literally = medicine, cure, figuratively = deliverance, healing, soothing. What a contrast with Ps 107:20 where "He sent His Word and healed [rapha] them"! (2Chr 36:15, 16, see 2Chr 36:17, 18, 19, 20, 21)

Comment: Beloved this verse should frighten every one of us - God is long suffering with sinners but there comes a time when He finally says in essence "enough is enough" and He must act.

Daniel 9:7 "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.

- **righteousness**: Da 9:8,14 Dt 32:4 Ezra 9:13 Neh 9:33 Ps 51:4,14 119:137 Jer 12:1 Lk 23:40,41
- **to us open shame**: Ezra 9:6,7 Ps 44:15 Isa 45:16 Jer 2:26,27 3:25 Ezek 16:63 36:31 Ro 6:21
- **nearby**: Dt 4:27 2Ki 17:6,7 Isa 11:11 Jer 24:9 Am 9:9 Ac 2:5-11
- **To which You have driven them**: Lev 26:33,34
- [Daniel 9 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**A SHAMEFUL PEOPLE
A SCATTERED PEOPLE
BECAUSE THEY WERE
A SINFUL PEOPLE!**

Righteousness - (**tsedaqah**) in simple terms is "what is right" and speaks of integrity, justice, right actions and attitudes, etc. God is perfectly, infinitely, eternally "right", whether He is punishing or forgiving. In this verse He was righteous and just in scattering His people because of their unfaithfulness. His righteousness is repeated in Da 9:14 and Da 9:16.

Righteousness belongs to You - It seems clear that Daniel wants to make absolutely certain that the consequences suffered by Judah are in no way attributable to God (in the sense that "it's God's fault" they had to be punished). God is perfectly righteous in all His ways. God had not failed Israel. Israel had failed God and had failed to seek His kingdom and His righteousness (Mt 6:33-note). And God was perfectly righteous in bringing **shame** upon His people and scattering them for their **unfaithful deeds**.

Guzik...

It would be easy to complain to God about Israel's problems. Daniel didn't think for a moment that God was too hard on Israel; he knew God was completely righteous and any failure was on Israel's side. Instead of **complaining**, Daniel **confessed**. During times of great revival among God's people, the Holy Spirit always brings a deep conviction and awareness of sin. When that is responded to rightly, confession is appropriately made. J. Edwin Orr gives a good principle to govern **confession**:

If you sin secretly, confess secretly, admitting publicly that you need the victory but keeping details to yourself. If you sin openly confess openly to remove stumbling blocks from those whom you have hindered. If you have sinned spiritually (prayerlessness, lovelessness, and unbelief as well as their offspring, criticism, etc.) then confess to the church that you have been a hindrance.

Daniel does not make the slightest excuse for Israel's sin. The fault belongs to Israel and Israel alone. We are prone to excuses for our sin and often even make even excuses in our "confessions."

But - Introduces the striking contrast. God's **righteousness** versus Judah's **shame**.

Open shame (KJV = "confusion of faces") is literally "shame of face"! The Hebrew word shame (**bosheth**) conveys the sense of humiliation, disgrace and the accompanying feelings of guilt and embarrassment. (Ezra 9:6,7)

Bosheth - 28x in 27v - 1Sa 20:30; 2 Chr 32:21; Ezra 9:7; Job 8:22; Ps 35:26; 40:15; 44:15; 69:19; 70:3; 109:29; 132:18; Isa 30:3, 5; 54:4; 61:7; Jer 3:24f; 7:19; 11:13; 20:18; Dan 9:7f; Hos 9:10; Mic 1:11; Hab 2:10; Zeph 3:5, 19. NAS = humiliation*(1), shame(21), shame*(2), shameful(1), shameful thing(3).

Ray Pritchard writes that "**we are covered with shame**" is ...

not a Politically Correct statement, is it? After all, we live in a shameless society filled with shameless people who do shameless deeds. The whole idea of "shame" seems to belong to another time and place. We're not ashamed of anything anymore. We don't blush because we aren't embarrassed because we've seen it all and heard it all. Even in the church some people dislike the notion of "shame." That's Old Testament, they say. In the age of grace, there is no need for shame. Or so we are told. But that is just so much theological flapdoodle. Sin always brings shame and always separates us from God. And when we sin deliberately and repeatedly, we ought to be ashamed. If we are not, it is because we have a seared conscience....

Today we use other words. We say, "I goofed" or "I blew it" or we talk about "mistakes" and "weaknesses" and we say "I made a boo-boo" or "My bad." But those terms tend to define sin downward. After all, how bad can a "boo-boo" be? It definitely is not as bad as "acting wickedly." He makes no excuses for their sin. Not once does he blame the "dirty Babylonians" or the "miserable Philistines" who led them into sin. None of that. No finger pointing. No "Blame Game," no self-justification of any kind. ([The Positive Power of Prayer](#))

Gleason Archer comments that...

This paragraph stresses the humiliation of the Hebrew people in the eyes of all the heathen. Back in the days of Moses, it was said of them: "For you are a people holy to the Lord your God. The Lord your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on the face of the earth to be his people, his treasured possession" (Deut 7:6). He had promised them military success so long as they remained faithful to him: "The Lord will grant that the enemies who rise up against you will be defeated before you" (Deut 28:7). . But now all that was reversed. ([Gaebelein, F. Editor: Expositor's Bible Commentary OT 7 Volume Set: Books: Zondervan Publishing or computer version](#))

You have driven them - God had sovereignly brought about the exile of His chosen people (to Assyria and Babylon) to fulfill His covenant promises (see Dt 28:36, 37, 49-68)

Those who are nearby and those who are far away - This seems to be an allusion to the scattering (**You have driven them**) of both Judah and her sister Israel, who had been taken into Assyrian captivity in 722BC.

Unfaithful - (Maal) means to act treacherously.

Maal - 26x in 26v - Lev 5:15; 6:2; Nu 5:6, 12, 27; 31:16; Josh 7:1; 22:16, 20, 22, 31; 1 Chr 9:1; 10:13; 2 Chr 28:19; 29:19; 33:19; 36:14; Ezra 9:2, 4; 10:6; Job 21:34; Ezek 15:8; 17:20; 18:24; 39:26; Dan 9:7. NAS = falsehood(1), treachery(2), trespass(1), trespass*(1), unfaithful(3), unfaithful act(4), unfaithful deeds(1), unfaithfully(6), unfaithfulness(6), very unfaithful(1).

Against You - Sin is against God - This is repeatedly emphasized (Da 9:7b, Da 9:8b, Da 9:9b, Da 9:11b)

Daniel 9:8 "Open shame belongs to us, O Lord, to our kings, our princes and our fathers, because we have sinned against You.

- **to us:** Da 9:6,7
- **because:** Jer 14:20 La 1:7,8,18 3:42 5:16
- [Daniel 9 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Open shame - Daniel repeats this phrase (from Da 9:7) which emphasizes its importance.

John MacArthur explains the idea of "open shame"...

"We were ashamed of ourselves. I mean we used to be somebody. Our land was a glorious land. Our people was a great people. We were proud, and now we are outcasts. We are wanderers. We are refugees." The north was gone into captivity under Assyria, never to return. The south had been carried away. The others had fled to Egypt when Gedaliah was...was assassinated in Jeremiah. Tells us about that. "And we're... we're all scattered, and we're ashamed. Our treacherous sins have sent us away, and our faces are covered with shame. Our kings are shamed. Our princes, our fathers, because we've sinned against Thee." ([Elements of True Prayer, Part 2](#))

We have sinned against (chata) ([See note on use in v5](#) used in Da 9:5, 8, 11, 15) - Not "they" but "**we**" as noted above. All sin is ultimately **against** God.

C H Spurgeon's devotional on Daniel 9:8...

Open shame belongs to us, O Lord, to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, because we have sinned against Thee.

**A deep sense and clear sight of sin, its heinousness,
and the punishment which it deserves,
should make us lie low before the throne.**

We have sinned as Christians. Alas! that it should be so. Favored as we have been, we have yet been ungrateful: privileged beyond most, we have not brought forth fruit in proportion. Who is there, although he may long have been engaged in the Christian warfare, that will not blush when he looks back upon the past? As for our days before we were regenerated, may they be forgiven and forgotten; but since then, though we have not sinned as before, yet **we have sinned against light and against love—light** which has really penetrated our minds, and **love** in which we have rejoiced.

**Oh, the atrocity of the sin
of a pardoned soul!**

An unpardoned sinner sins cheaply compared with the sin of one of God's own elect ones, who has had communion with Christ and leaned his head upon Jesus' bosom. Look at David! Many will talk of his sin, but I pray you look at his repentance, and hear his broken bones, as each one of them moans out its dolorous confession! Mark his tears, as they fall upon the ground, and the deep sighs with which he accompanies the softened music of his harp!

**We have erred: let us, therefore,
seek the spirit of penitence.**

Look, again, at Peter! We speak much of Peter's denying his Master. Remember, it is written, **He wept bitterly.**" (Mt 26:75, Lk 22:62) Have we no denials of our Lord to be lamented with tears? Alas! these sins of ours, before and after conversion, would consign us to the place of inextinguishable fire if it were not for the sovereign mercy which has made us to differ, snatching us like brands from the burning.

**My soul, bow down under
a sense of thy natural sinfulness,
and worship thy God.
Admire the grace which saves thee—**

**the mercy which spares thee—
the love which pardons thee!**

Daniel 9:9 "To the Lord our God belong compassion and forgiveness, for we have rebelled against Him;

- **To the Lord:** Da 9:7 Ex 34:6,7 Nu 14:18,19 Ne 9:17,31 Ps 62:12 86:5,15 130:4,7 Ps 145:8,9 Isa 55:7 63:7 La 3:22,23 Jon 4:2 Mic 7:18,19 Eph 1:6-8 2:4-7
- **For we:** Da 9:5 Ne 9:18,19,26-28 Ps 106:43-45 Jer 14:7 Ezek 20:8,9,13
- [Daniel 9 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Miller...

In the Hebrew these plurals are intensive, emphasizing God's great and manifold "mercies" and his abundant forgiveness. Even though Israel had "rebelled" (mārad) against him, there was yet hope because the sovereign Lord is "merciful" and "forgiving." All persons have rebelled against God to varying degrees and need his mercy and forgiveness to be made right with him. (New American Commentary – Volume 18: Daniel)

Adam Clarke

From God's goodness flow God's mercies; from his mercies, forgivenesses.

Compassion (KJV = mercies) - The idea of compassion is a sympathetic consciousness of others' distress together with a desire to alleviate it. So Daniel is appealing to this character of God. Note that compassion is a prerequisite for forgiveness.

This Hebrew word for compassion is **racham** which can mean womb (when used in the singular form) or when in the plural form describes tender mercy (the womb was considered the seat of warm, tender emotions) which in the case of God are rooted in His deep love and infinite grace. **Racham** is used to describe Joseph's deep yearning feeling toward Benjamin in Ge 43:30 (cf the woman who "was deeply stirred over her son" in 1Ki 3:26 and was willing to give him to the other woman who was not his mother), but most of the OT uses refer to God's racham. **Nehemiah** in reviewing Israel's history shows how God's great racham was associated with actions (deliverance, rescue, not forsaking or making an end of them) that were in response to Israel's crying out to Him and this forms the "basis" for Daniel's petitions beginning in Da 9:15...

Therefore Thou didst deliver them into the hand of their oppressors who oppressed them, **But when they cried to Thee in the time of their distress**, Thou didst hear from heaven, and according to Thy great **compassion** Thou didst give them deliverers who delivered them from the hand of their oppressors. 28 "But as soon as they had rest, they did evil again before Thee; Therefore Thou didst abandon them to the hand of their enemies, so that they ruled over them. **When they cried again to Thee, Thou didst hear from heaven, and many times Thou didst rescue them according to Thy compassion...** Nevertheless, in Thy great **compassion** (racham) **Thou didst not make an end of them or forsake them**, for Thou art a gracious and compassionate (rachuw) God. (Neh 9:27, 28, 31)

Racham - 39x in 39v - Ge 43:14, 30; Deut 13:17 ("turn from His burning anger and show **mercy**"); 2 Sam 24:14 ("His **mercies** are great"); 1 Kgs 3:26; 8:50; 1 Chr 21:13 ("His **mercies** are very great"); 2 Chr 30:9; Neh 1:11 (Nehemiah's prayer that God "grant him **compassion** before this man"); Neh 9:19 ("Thy great compassion, Didst not forsake them in the wilderness") Neh 9:27f, 31; Ps 25:6; 40:11; 51:1; 69:16; 77:9; 79:8; 103:4; 106:46; 119:77, 156; 145:9; Pr 12:10; Isa 47:6; 54:7; 63:7, 15; Jer 16:5; 42:12; Lam 3:22; Dan 1:9; 9:9, 18; Hos 2:19; Amos 1:11; Zech 1:16; 7:9. **NAS** = compassion(30), compassions(1), deeply(1), deeply(1), mercies(4), mercy(2)

David asks God to remember His compassion in Ps 25:6

Remember, O LORD, Thy **compassion** (racham) and Thy lovingkindnesses (hesed), for they have been from of old.

Spurgeon comments: We are usually tempted in seasons of affliction to fear that our God has forgotten us, or forgotten His usual kindness towards us; hence the soul doth as it were put the Lord in remembrance, and beseech Him to recollect those deeds of love which once He wrought towards it. There is a holy boldness which ventures thus to deal with the Most High, let us cultivate it; but there is also an unholy unbelief which suggests our fears, let us strive against it with all our might. What gems are those two expressions, "**tender mercies and lovingkindnesses!**" **They are the virgin honey of language; for sweetness no words can excel them; but as for the gracious favors which are intended by them, language fails to describe**

them.

Forgiveness - The Hebrew **Selichah** is found only 3 times in the OT, here in Da 9:9 and in the 2 passages below...

Nehemiah 9:17 They refused to listen, and did not remember your wondrous deeds which You had performed among them; so they became stubborn and appointed a leader to return to their slavery in Egypt (Nu 14:4). But You are a God of **forgiveness**, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness; and You did not forsake them.

Psalms 130:4 But there is **forgiveness** with You, that You may be feared.

Spurgeon comments: Blessed but. Free, full, sovereign pardon is in the hand of the great King: it is his prerogative to forgive, and he delights to exercise it. Because His nature is mercy, and because He has provided a sacrifice for sin, therefore forgiveness is with Him for all that come to Him confessing their sins. The power of pardon is permanently resident with God: He has forgiveness ready to His hand at this instant.

"That thou mayest be feared." This is the fruitful root of piety. None fear the Lord like those who have experienced His forgiving love. Gratitude for pardon produces far more fear and reverence of God than all the dread which is inspired by punishment. If the Lord were to execute justice upon all, there would be none left to fear him; if all were under apprehension of his deserved wrath, despair would harden them against fearing him: it is grace which leads the way to a holy regard of God, and a fear of grieving him.

Thomas Adams "One would think that punishment should procure fear, and forgiveness love; but no man more truly loves God than he that is most fearful to offend Him.

George Bowen: This forgiveness, this smile of God, binds the soul to God with a beautiful fear. Fear to lose one glance of love. Fear to lose one work of kindness. Fear to be carried away from the heaven of his presence by an insidious current of worldliness. Fear of slumber. Fear of error. Fear of not enough pleasing him. Our duty, then, is to drink deep of God's forgiving love. To be filled with it is to be filled with purity, fervency, and faith. Our sins have to hide their diminished heads, and slink away through crevices, when forgiveness -- when Christ -- enters the soul.

Daniel 9:10 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.

- **which:** Da 9:6 2Ki 17:13 18:12 Ezra 9:10,11 Ne 9:13, 14, 15, 16, 17 Heb 1:1
- [Daniel 9 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Nor have we obeyed - Repeats the confession of Da 9:6. Hearing does not guarantee obedience!

NET Bible note...

"paid attention to the voice of," which is an idiomatic expression for obedience

Walk - Is used in the figurative sense to refer to one's conduct or behavior. Their conduct demonstrated that they had not **obeyed the voice of Jehovah**. There are two ways to walk - according to God's teachings (His Word which defines His will) or according to one's own will (which is essentially "anti-God").

Teachings - Hebrew **Torah** is used over 200x in the OT and most often (188x in NAS) translated "law". **Torah** is derived from the verb **ayah** which means to teach or instruct, and thus the Torah is a general reference to God's instructions, providing understanding in that about which Israel was otherwise ignorant.

Set before us - More literally, set before our face.

Daniel 9:11 "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.

- **all:** 2Ki 17:18-23 Isa 1:4-6 Jer 8:5-10 9:26 Eze 22:26-31
- **the curse:** Lev 26:14-46 Dt 27:15-26 28:15-68 29:20-29 30:17-19 31:17,18 Dt 32:19-42

- [Daniel 9 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

All Israel - "All" is the particle "kol" which speaks of the entirety of Israel, so that there are no exceptions. Daniel is not trying to make excuses. He is laying out his soul before the all seeing God.

Transgressed - Hebrew abar means to pass or go beyond as when one physically crosses over, but is used figuratively here to mean that Israel "over stepped" God's **law** (torah), going beyond what He had stipulated in the Mosaic Covenant.

Turned aside - The Hebrew (**cur/sur**) means literally to turn away or turn aside (eg, Moses Ex 3:3, 4) but is used figuratively by Daniel to describe God's people turning away from Him. The implication is that their turning away reflects their rebellious heart.

In **Proverbs** we read the effect the Law should have had on God's people...

The **teaching (torah)** of the wise is a fountain of life, to **turn aside** (sur/cur) from the snares of death. (Pr 13:14)

Israel had the knowledge of God's truth which should have made them **turn away** from evil (cp Pr 13:19) but in a tragic paradox they chose instead to **turn away** from His torah!

Not obeying Your voice - For the third time Daniel confesses Israel's disobedience to God's **voice** (first use of Hebrew word qol is God's "sound" in Ge 3:8, 10 where sin made man turn away from God).

The curse has been poured out on us - "Curse is singular and definite in the Hebrew, indicating that a specific curse was in view. God had promised blessing for obedience, cursing for disobedience and He was now keeping His promise...

But it shall come about, **if** (condition - remember this is referring to the Mosaic Covenant, a conditional covenant) you will not obey the LORD your God, to observe to do all His commandments and His statutes with which I charge you today, that **all these curses shall come upon you and overtake you....45 "So all these curses shall come on you** and pursue you and overtake you until you are destroyed, because you would not obey the LORD your God by keeping His commandments and His statutes which He commanded you....49 The LORD will bring a nation against you from afar (A prophecy that was partially fulfilled with the invasion of Babylon), from the end of the earth, as the eagle swoops down, a nation whose language you shall not understand..."And it shall come about that as the LORD delighted over you to prosper you, and multiply you, so the LORD will delight over you to make you perish and destroy you; and you shall be torn from the land where you are entering to possess it. (Dt 28:15, 45, 49, 63- **Take a moment and read the litany of curses in** Dt 28:16-68, Lev 26:14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25-39)

Poured out (natak) can refer to literal pouring but can also have a figurative meaning. In fact about half of the 19 uses of natak in the OT refer to God's wrath or anger being **poured out** upon some aspect of sin (sinful men, cities, countries - 2Chr 12:7, 2Chr 34:21, 25, Jer. 7:20; 42:18; 44:6; Da 9:11, Da 9:27; Nah 1:6).

Huldah the prophetess gave the following interpretation (? prophecy) to King Josiah's representatives stating that...

Because they (the people of Judah) have forsaken Me and have burned incense to other gods, that they might provoke Me to anger with all the works of their hands (the idols), therefore My wrath **will be poured out on this place** (referring to Jerusalem and the Babylonian exile), and it shall not be quenched." (2 Chr 34:25)

Natak - 19v: Ex9:33 2Sa21:10 2Ki22:9 2Ch12:7 34:17, 21, 25 Job3:24 10:10 Je7:20 42:18 44:6 Eze22:20-22 24:11 Da 9:11 9:27 Na 1:6

The oath (sebuwah) refers to a solemn affirmation or declaration which is used to validate a promise and in Biblical times was used to "seal" treaties to assure neither party broke their promise (Ge 26:28). In a number of OT passages, **oath** refers to God's promise to keep the Abrahamic covenant (Ge 26:3, Dt 7:8, 1Chr 16:16, Ps 105:9, Jer 11:5), but clearly in the present context the oath refers to God's promise to keep His word to punish disobedience. This promise of punishment is based on the **oath** God made in His covenant with Israel at Mt Sinai (cf. Dt 29:12)

In **Deuteronomy** God made an **oath** (swearing by heaven and earth) declaring...

I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the **curse**. So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants, by loving the LORD your God, by obeying His voice, and by holding fast to Him; for this is your life and the length of your days, that you may live in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them." (Dt 30:19, 20)

Regarding the combination of **curse** and **oath** the **Net Bible** has an insightful note explaining that...

the term "**curse**" refers here to the judgments threatened in the Mosaic law (see Deut 28) for rebellion. The expression "**the curse and the oath**" is probably a **hendiadys** (cf. Nu 5:21; Neh 10:28, 29) referring to the fact that the covenant with its threatened judgments was ratified by solemn **oath** and made legally binding upon the covenant community. (**Note: Hendiadys** = the expression of an idea by the use of usually two independent words connected by and [as nice and warm] instead of the usual combination of independent word and its modifier)

Sinned (chata) ([See note on use in v5](#) used in Da 9:5, 8, 11, 15)

Daniel reiterates that it is "our fault"! It was in the law of Moses but that is the very truth we have not obeyed, which we have transgressed, from which we have turned aside, thus causing us to sin against God!

Against Him - Sin is against God (Da 9:7b, Da 9:8b, Da 9:9b, Da 9:11b)

Daniel 9:12 "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.

- **confirmed:** Isa 44:26 La 2:17 Eze 13:6 Zec 1:8 Mt 5:18 Ro 15:8
- **our rulers:** 1Ki 3:9 Job 12:17 Ps 2:10 148:11 Pr 8:16
- **under the whole heaven:** La 1:12 2:13 4:6 Eze 5:9 Joe 2:2 Am 3:2 Mt 24:21 Mk 13:19 Lk 21:22
- [Daniel 9 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Thus He has confirmed - He has fulfilled is somewhat easier to understand. In other words God kept His word, His specific promise of cursing as specified in the Mosaic Covenant.

Rulers who ruled us - More literally judges who judged us.

Great Calamity - The defeat of Judah, destruction of the holy city, Jerusalem and the destruction of the Holy Temple.

Calamity (ra') means bad or evil, the very thing God had repeatedly exhorted his people to turn from (Isa 1:16, Dt 13:12; 2 Ki 17:13; 2Chr 7:14; Jer 18:11, Jer 25:4, 5, Jer 35:15, Eze 33:11; Zec 1:4)! Divine, "poetic" justice!

Not been done anything like what was done to Jerusalem - Such a horrible disaster had never occurred to any other nation. In other words other nations had suffered great calamities but they did not have the true and living God. Jerusalem's fate was unique in the world history for it was represented calamity to a nation and a city wherein dwelt the true God.

Jeremiah writes that...

the iniquity of the daughter of my people is greater than the sin of Sodom, which was overthrown as in a moment, and no hands were turned toward her. (Lam 4:6)

Ezekiel adds that...

And because of all your abominations, I will do among you what I have not done, and the like of which I will never do again. (Ezekiel 5:9)

Amos explains why Judah's punishment was even more "harsh" than one might think they deserved...

You only have I chosen among all the families of the earth. Therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities. (Amos 3:2)

The point is that Judah had the spiritual light and was being held accountable for their rejection of so great a light of revelation of the living and true God.

Archer adds that...

Had God not fulfilled his word of judgment, little credence could be placed in his word of grace. If a nation like Judah, instructed so perfectly in the truth of God, could fall into idolatry and immorality and defy the Lord to punish them as he had promised to do, why should anyone obey the Almighty or believe in him? The Fall of Jerusalem, the destruction of the temple, and the removal of the nation from their ancestral soil—all this served to vindicate the holiness and righteousness of God and to demonstrate to all the world the sanctity of

his moral law. ([Gaebelein, F. Editor: Expositor's Bible Commentary OT 7 Volume Set: Books: Zondervan Publishing](#))

Daniel 9:13 "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.

- **As it is written:** Da 9:11 Lev 26:14-46 Dt 28:15-68 Isa 42:9 La 2:15-17 John 10:35
- **We have not sought:** Job 36:13 Isa 9:13 Jer 2:30 5:3 Ho 7:7,10,14
- **By turning:** Dt 29:4 Ps 85:4 119:18,27,73 Isa 64:7 Jer 31:18 44:27 La 5:21 Lk 24:45 Jn 6:45 8:32 Eph 1:17,18 4:21 Jas 1:5
- [Daniel 9 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

As it is written in the Law of Moses - Judah did not have to guess at what God desired of them nor how He would punish them for flagrant disobedience. God had warned them (Lev 26:14-46 Dt 28:15-68). God's promises are unchangeable, both those that are "positive" and those that bring "negative" consequences!

All this calamity has come on us - God is not mocked. To ignore, reject or disobey God's words of warning regarding disobedience is tantamount to mocking Him. Judah had sown to their flesh and now they were reaping the evil fruit of their sowing. God's punishment was just. It was not a surprise.

Yet we have not sought the favor of the LORD our God - This is a sad "yet". This is an amazing statement. Here the Jews were in exile, their city and Temple destroyed, and they still had not sought God's favor!

Turning from our iniquity and giving attention to Your truth - This is an excellent description of genuine **repentance**. But sadly it was not a description of Judah. They had still not repented despite the great calamity that God had brought upon them.

John Phillips offers a scathing comment emphasizing how despite Judah's many "warnings" she repeatedly failed to be broken and to repent, surely a reflection of a heart as hard and cold as stone...

Did the people repent when the Assyrians carried away the entire northern kingdom and ravaged Judah right down to Jerusalem itself? Only until the death of godly King Hezekiah—then Judah followed Manasseh into worse wickedness than before. Did the people repent when Josiah found a copy of the law in the temple after God's Word had been so completely forgotten that he read it with astonishment and resolve? Only until his death (**Ed**: The truth is they had remorse but not repentance!). Did the people repent when the Babylonians first appeared and encamped in battle array around Jerusalem? **No**. Did they repent when Jerusalem fell in 605BC and the cream of the Judean aristocracy was taken away to Babylon? **No**. Did they repent when the second Babylonian expedition appeared before Jerusalem and Jehoiachin was deposed and Zedekiah installed as a puppet king in his place in 597BC? **No**. Did they repent when Zedekiah was summoned to Babylon in 594BC? **No**. Did they repent when the Babylonians appeared in force before Jerusalem for the final siege in 587BC? **Not at all**. Did they repent when Jerusalem fell at last and was sacked in 586BC? **No**. Did they repent in Babylon? **No**. (Exploring the Book of Daniel: An Expository Commentary)

The corollary principle is that one is unlikely to give attention to God's truth, if there is no sincere turning from one's iniquity.

We see **Peter** invoke this principle in his exhortation to the newly born again readers of his epistle...

Therefore, putting aside all malice and all guile and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, like newborn babes, long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation (1Pe 2:1,2)

Peter says the believer must throw aside the "filthy garments" of verse 1. If one fails to confess and repent of the sins of verse 1, they will not experience the deep God given hunger for His Word described in verse 2 and consequently they will fail to experience spiritual growth. Do you hunger for God's Word like a newly born baby does for milk? If not you might consider doing an "inventory" of the 5 pieces of "filthy clothes" Peter describes in verse 1.

Daniel 9:14 "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.

- **Has kept:** Jer 31:28 44:27

- **the Lord:** Da 9:7 Ne 9:33 Ps 51:14
- **But we have not obeyed:** Da 9:10
- [Daniel 9 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Kept the calamity in store - More literally this reads He "watched over the evil (disaster)". This is a difficult phrase to interpret but in the context it appears to indicate that God **kept the calamity in store** should Judah not turn from her wicked ways. And when she did not repent, the **calamity** was ready and waiting to be brought upon the disobedient people.

Jamieson comments that the picture of God keeping the calamity in store or as the KJV phrases it "watch over the evil" is an expression of ...

ceaseless vigilance that His people's sins might not escape His judgment, as a watchman on guard night and day (Job 14:16 Je 31:28 Je 44:27). **God watching upon the Jews punishment forms a striking contrast to the Jews slumbering in their sins.**

Keil notes that...

Because Israel did not do this, therefore the Lord watched upon the evil, i.e., continually thought thereon—an idea very frequently found in Jeremiah; cf. Jer 1:12; 31:28; 44:27. (Keil and Delitzsch)

Brought it on us - The calamity is from the hand of God. He **brought it on** Judah and Jerusalem.

For - This explains that God was right in bringing the calamity on Judah, because everything He does is **righteous** (just). Judah deserved the calamity.

But we have not obeyed His voice - This phrase echoes Da 9:13. God's hand of discipline failed to bring about any change of heart in Judah.

Daniel 9:15 "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.

- **You have brought::** Ex 6:1,6 14:1-15:27 32:11 1Ki 8:51 Ne 1:10 Jer 32:20-23 2Co 1:10
- **made a name:** Ex 9:16 14:18 Ne 9:10 Ps 106:8 Isa 55:13 Jer 32:10
- **we have sinned:** Da 9:5 Lk 15:18,19,21 18:13
- [Daniel 9 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Da 9:4-14 Confession Da 9:15-19 Petition

The **Bible Knowledge Commentary** ...

Daniel began his petition (Da 9:15) by mentioning two of the same things with which he began his confession (Da 9:4, 5): God's greatness and the people's sin.

Brought Your people out of the land of Egypt - God's deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage brought glory to His name among the idol worshipping Gentile nations (e.g., Ex 15:13, 14, 15, 16, see Rahab's testimony in Josh 2:8, 9, 10, 11, cf Josh 5:1). Thus it is not surprising that this truth of God's miraculous deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage is repeatedly mentioned in the Old Testament (>100 times!). In the present context, Daniel reminds God of His past great deliverance of Israel from Egypt in preparation for his pious plea for a second great deliverance of His people from Babylon.

Israel's deliverance from Egypt is the the Old Testament "standard" of God's power.

We have sinned, we have been wicked - Daniel reiterates (confesses) the reason Judah is in need of deliverance.

Daniel 9:16 "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.

- **accordance:** 1Sa 2:7 Ne 9:8 Ps 31:1 71:2 143:1 Mic 6:4,5 2Th 1:6 1Jn 1:9
- **holy mountain:** Da 9:20 Ps 87:1-3 Joe 3:17 Zec 8:3
- **for the:** Ex 20:5 Lev 26:39,40 Ps 106:6-48 Mt 23:31,32 Lk 11:47-51
- **Jerusalem:** 1Ki 9:7-9 Ps 41:13 79:4 Isa 64:9-11 Jer 24:9 29:18 La 1:8,9 La 2:15,16
- [Daniel 9 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

O Lord - O **Adonai**, Master, Sovereign.

In accordance with all Your righteous acts - The basis of any appeal to God is founded on His character not any any merit of our own.

Guzik...It is as if Daniel prayed, "Lord, I'm not asking You to do anything against Your righteousness. I'm praying this to advance Your righteous glory."

Let now - This marks the beginning of Daniel's petitions.

Because of our sins and the iniquities of our fathers - Again he confesses the guilt of Judah, past and present.

Jerusalem and Your people have become a reproach to all those around us (the Gentile nations) - Understand that the idea of a **reproach** refers to a cause or occasion of shame, blame, discredit, or disgrace. It means to be an object of contempt, scorn, derision, or dishonor. We see this idea of **reproach** in association with Jerusalem and the state of disrepair of God's Holy Temple and the surroundings in Nehemiah (Neh 1:3, 2:17, 4:4, 5:9). Ezekiel, Daniel's fellow prophet in exile, records the following regarding the reproach of the pagans...

Also I (Jehovah) scattered them among the nations (Gentiles), and they were dispersed throughout the lands (Israel 722BC, Judah 586BC). According to their ways and their deeds I judged them. When they came to the nations where they went, they **profaned** (defiled, polluted, desecrated, treated with irreverence or contempt) My holy name, because it was said of them, 'These are the people of the LORD; yet they have come out of His land.' (Ezek 36:19, 20)

Daniel 9:17 "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."

- **let your face:** Nu 6:23, 24, 25 26 Ps 4:6 67:1 80:1,3,7,19 119:135 Rev 21:23
- **sanctuary:** La 5:18
- **for Your sake:** Da 9:19 Jn 16:24 2Co 1:20
- [Daniel 9 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Gleason Archer comments on the phrase **for Your sake**...

Like Moses in his prayer of intercession after the golden calf apostasy (Ex 32:12,13), Daniel was chiefly concerned about the tarnishing of God's reputation in the eyes of the world (Da 9:18,19). If Yahweh allowed his sanctuary and holy city to lie permanently in ruins and his people to remain in exile, then who among the surrounding nations would believe that the God of the Bible was the true and holy Sovereign over all the universe?

Let Your face shine - **Guzik** writes that...

Cause Your face to shine: This is the heart of Daniel's plea. He knows that God's people need so much, but all their need can be summed up in this: they need God's face to shine upon them.

"Oh, that we might learn how to pray so that God should be the subject as well as the object of our supplications! O God, thy Church needs thee above everything else! A poor, little, sick, neglected child needs fifty things; but you can put all those needs into one if you say that the child needs its mother. So, the Church, of God needs a thousand things, but you can put them all into one if you say, 'The Church of God needs her God.' " (Spurgeon)

Daniel's prayer is consumed with the glory of God, not primarily the benefit of man. His purpose in prayer was to see God's work accomplished and His cause glorified.

It isn't wrong to pray for our own needs. Jesus invited us to ask, give us this day our daily bread. At the same

time, we need to have an even greater passion for the glory and benefit of God.

We should pray with the same passion and concern for the work of God in our congregations and communities. We can pray the prayer of Psalm 85:6: Will You not revive us again, that Your people may rejoice in You? Alone and in groups we can pray for God to pour out the Holy Spirit, to bring repentance and revival among His people, and to awaken the unconverted.

This also speaks to purity of motive in Daniel's prayer. Sometimes we pray for God to do a great work so we can be known as great workers for God. We need to pray for the sake of the Lord's cause, both in our words and heart.

Daniel 9:18 "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.

- **incline:** 1Ki 8:29 2Ki 19:16 Ps 17:6,7 Isa 37:17 63:15-19 64:12
- **See our desolations:** Ex 3:7 Ps 80:14-19
- **Which is called by You name:** Jer 7:10 14:9 15:16 25:29 1Co 1:2
- **for we:** Isa 64:6 Jer 14:7 Eze 36:32
- **presenting:** Heb. cause to fall, Jer 36:7 37:20
- [Daniel 9 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Not...on account of any merits of our own - Not our goodness, but God's goodness!

Pritchard...

It's worth noting that the petition section comes at the end of the prayer. He doesn't ask God for anything at all until he has first thoroughly confessed the sins of the people. After all, until the sin that caused the exile in the first place is dealt with, there is no basis for asking God to restore his people.

Taking the prayer as a whole, we discover that everything Daniel says is based upon God's character:

You are awesome—(Da 9:4)

You always keep your promises—(Da 9:4)

You are righteous—(Da 9:7)

You are a forgiving God—(Da 9:9)

You have a great name—(Da 9:15)

You are a merciful God—(Da 9:18)

In many ways verse 18 is the theme of the whole prayer: "We do not make requests of you because we are righteous, but because of your great mercy." What a crucial insight that is. So many times we pray because we secretly think we have "earned" the right by our good behavior to ask God to bless us. Daniel chose the opposite tack. "Lord, we don't deserve to be heard by you because we have sinned greatly against you. The only reason we come to you is because you are a God of love and grace." When we approach God with that attitude, we will discover that he welcomes us into his presence and listens graciously to every word we say. ([The Positive Power of Prayer](#))

Guzik...

This is what it means to pray in the name of Jesus. Those aren't words we tack on to the end of a prayer, but they should express the fact we are praying in merits and righteousness of Jesus, not our own.

Daniel was not great because he prayed. He was great because his prayer was the necessary expression of great trust and dependence on God. Many religious people spend countless hours in prayer but it achieves nothing because it is not rooted in the goodness and righteousness of God. Self righteous or self trusting prayer is of no power before God. "One of Satan's most subtle delusions is that he succeeds in getting hundreds of thousands of men to trust in prayer, apart from faith in the shed blood of Jesus." (Talbot)

But on account of - When we approach God in prayer, we always do so on the basis not of who we are or what think we merit but

on the basis of Who God is, a God Whose great compassion flings open the door of the Throne Room of Heaven that we might dare (yea, even boldly) approach Him through Christ Jesus our Mediator. Hallelujah.

Great compassion - God answers prayer because of His mercy not man's merit!

Regarding God's **great compassion**, **Francis Schaeffer** once said...

I must say that when I pray for my country and our culture, I do not pray for **God's justice**. I can only plead for **His mercy**. If we had the justice of God, we would not have peace. We would have a situation like Jeremiah's (referring to Jer 25:10). How dare we pray for justice upon our culture when we have so deliberately turned away for God and His revelation? Why should God bless us? (**Woe!**) (Death in the City. 1969)

Daniel 9:19 O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and take action! For Your own sake, O my God, do not delay, because Your city and Your people are called by Your name.

- **forgive:** Nu 14:19 1Ki 8:30-39 2Ch 6:21,25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30,39 Am 7:2 Lk 11:8
- **do not delay:** Ps 44:23-26 74:9, 10, 11 79:5 85:5,6 102:13,14 Isa 64:9, 10, 11, 12
- **Your own sake:** Ps 79:8, 9, 10 102:15,16 115:1,2 Jer 14:7,20,21 Eze 20:9,14,22 Eze 36:22 39:25 Eph 1:6,12 3:10
- **because your city:** Da 9:18 Ps 79:6 Isa 63:16-19 Jer 14:9 25:29
- [Daniel 9 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**"O Adonai, hear; O Adonai, forgive; O Adonai, hearken and do:
defer not, for thine own sake, O my God"**

O Lord - O Adonai - Three times. It's as if Daniel is crying out "Master, give me Judah or I die!"

Spurgeon wrote...

Cold prayers ask God to deny them: only **importunate** (troublesomely urgent: overly persistent in request or demand) prayers will be replied to. When the Church of God cannot take 'No' for an answer, she shall not have 'No' for an answer. When a pleading soul must have it; when the Spirit of God works mightily in him so that he cannot let the angel go without a blessing, the angel shall not go till he has given the blessing to such a pleading one.

**Brethren, if there be only one among us that can pray as Daniel did,
with intensity, the blessing will come.**

For Your own sake...because of Your city...Your people...Your name - Daniel's prayer is clearly God centered and structured so as to give Him the glory (cf Ps 115:1).

Your city - Jehovah's reputation among the Gentile nations (and the Jews for that matter) was associated with Jerusalem, for God Himself declared that this was "the place where I have chosen to cause My Name to dwell" (Neh 1:9).

The Africa Bible Commentary rightly concludes that...

When a prayer is about nothing but God's own interest, it cannot go unanswered. **Note: Beloved, Daniel 9 makes a great "grid" by which we can evaluate the character and focus of our prayers - are they "me" centered or God centered?)**

Daniel 9:20 Now while 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 in behalf of the holy mountain of my God,

- **while:** Da 10:2 Ps 32:5 145:18 Isa 58:9 65:24 Ac 4:31 10:30,31
- **confessing:** Da 9:4 Ec 7:20 Isa 6:5 Ro 3:23 Jas 3:2 1Jn 1:8-10
- **of the holy mountain:** Da 9:16 Ps 137:5,6 Isa 56:7 62:6,7 Zec 8:3 Rev 21:2,10
- [Daniel 9 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

While I was speaking and praying - Observe how the answer comes before he is even finished! And note at what point he is interrupted (Da 9:19) Jesus said, your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him (Mt 6:8).

Observe also that God answers the prayers of sinners ("my sin", of the realistic, rhetorical question in Pr 20:9!), so clearly sinlessness is not a requirement. However, if we follow Daniel's powerful pattern of prayer, confession of our sin is a vital part of our prayer. I must confess, while I do confess my sins to some degree, I fear I have underestimated the importance of this aspect of prayer. How are you doing in this regard beloved? Perhaps the importance of confession is emphasized in the great Psalm 139 where David begins with the acknowledgement that Jehovah had "searched" him and "known" him and yet is still impelled and inspired by the Spirit to plead...

Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me and know my anxious thoughts; and see if there be any hurtful way in me, And lead me in the everlasting way. (Ps 139:23, 24)

My sin - Holy men of God (Ezek 14:14, 20) were always acutely aware of how far short they fell of God's perfect holiness.

The holy mountain of my God - A reference to the site which we know today as "Temple Mount" and which is synonymous with **Mt Moriah** ('the place where Yhwh sees') the site upon which Abraham offered his "only son" Isaac whom he loved (Ge 22:2). Abraham called the name of that place The LORD Will Provide - **Jehovah Jireh (see study)** - as it is said to this day, "In the mount of the LORD it will be provided (Ge 22:14). Later this was the site of the threshing floor of **Ornan** which David purchased for Solomon's temple (1Ch 21:18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 2, 25, 26, 2Sa 24:24, 25, 2Ch 3:1] Nearby is **Golgotha** (Jn 19:17) also called Calvary (in same range as Moriah but slightly NW) on which God the Father offered up His only Son, the Son Whom He loved (Jn 3:16, 3:35)

Daniel 9:21 while I was still speaking in prayer, then the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision previously, came to me in my extreme weariness about the time of the evening offering.

- **the man:** Da 8:16 10:16 Lk 1:19
- **came to me:** Ps 103:20 104:4 Isa 6:2 Eze 1:11,14 Heb 1:7
- **touched in KJV:** Da 8:18 10:10,16,18 Isa 6:6,7 Ac 12:7 Heb 1:14
- **the time:** 1Ki 18:36 Ezra 9:5 Mt 27:46 Ac 3:1 10:3,9
- [Daniel 9 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

While I was still speaking in prayer (see Da 6:10-note for Daniel's prayer "schedule") - Daniel did not even get to say "Amen"!

Strauss has an interesting comment that...

The elderly saint of God was given a foretaste of **Millennial** blessing when, according to God's own Word, "Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear" (Isaiah 65:24)(Ibid)

The man Gabriel - An angelic messenger in the form of a man (cf appearances to Zacharias father of John the Baptist in Lk 1:19, to Mary the mother of our Lord Lk 1:26, 27).

As the writer of **Hebrews** asks rhetorically...

Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?
(Heb 1:14-note)

Whom I had seen in the vision previously - In Daniel 8:16 Gabriel gave Daniel an understanding of the second vision.

My extreme weariness (Literally, wearied with weariness) - If this is the correct rendering (see note below), the context suggests it would relate to Daniel's agonizing in an emotional, heart rending prayer (not to mention the potential draining effect of a significant fast), which reminds one of Epaphras of whom Paul wrote...

Epaphras, who is one of your number (the Colossian saints), a bonds slave of Jesus Christ, sends you his greetings, always laboring earnestly (agonizomai in the present tense = agonizing in prayer was the habitual practice of Epaphras) for you in his prayers, that you may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God.
(Col 4:12-note)

The **NAS** (and New English Translation - **NET**) rendering "**in...extreme weariness**" is not favored by some translations (eg, ESV, KJV, NIV) which render it "**in swift flight**" (Gabriel "came to me in swift flight"). This latter seems less likely in view of the fact that specifically Gabriel appeared in the form of a "**man**" and men do not have wings as would be necessary for swift flight.

The **NET Bible note** explains that...

The Hebrew expression מְאַף בְּיָמָיו (mu'af bi'af) is very difficult. The issue is whether the verb derives from אָפוּ ('uf, "to fly") or from יָאָף (ya'af, "to be weary"). Many ancient versions and modern commentators take the first of these possibilities and understand the reference to be to the **swift flight** of the angel Gabriel in his coming to Daniel. The words more likely refer to the **extreme weariness**, not of the angel, but of Daniel. Cf. Da 7:28; 8:27; 10:8, 9, 16, 17.

The evening offering - This was also the time of one of other great "prayers of nine" (Ezra 9:5, - Daniel⁹, Ezra **9**, Nehemiah **9**) The mention is fascinating for this practice had vanished when the Temple had been destroyed some 60(+/-) years prior. And yet Daniel's use of this specific phrase emphasizes how important the ancient offering was to him, for it was still a vivid impression in his mind. Instead of a blemish free lamb that was required for the evening offering, Daniel presented himself as a "living sacrifice" to God (cf Ro 12:1-note).

In Nu 28:3-5 Moses records the provision for the morning and evening offering, the evening offering of the unblemished lamb in the evening being at 3PM which is when the Lamb of God died on the Cross.

Strauss notes that despite the fact that the Temple's destruction had brought an end to the morning and evening sacrifices...

Daniel's heart never ceased to be an altar at the dedicated hour of sacrifice. Away in exile in pagan Babylon, a holy man of God met with God at a stated hour. The time of the evening sacrifice was between three and four o'clock in the afternoon, referred to in Scripture as the "ninth hour" (Acts 3:1; 10:3, 30). It was at the hour when Old Testament sacrifices were offered, that ninth hour, that God's Lamb died at Calvary (Mt 27:46; Mk 15:34). Those smoking sacrifices in Old Testament times pointed to the offering of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Ibid)

Regarding the **evening offering**, Warren Wiersbe quips

He was living in Babylon but was still measuring time by Jewish religious practices! (Bible Exposition Commentary - Old Testament)

Daniel 9:22 He gave me instruction and talked with me and said, "O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you insight with understanding.

- [Daniel 9 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Pritchard writes...

True prayer always leads to new insight and deeper understanding. Since prayer in its deepest sense is a kind of "conversation" with God, when we talk with the Lord, we always end up learning things we didn't know before. Prayer that comes from the heart teaches us things about God, ourselves, and our circumstances that couldn't come any other way. It is hard to put into words exactly what this means but multitudes of Christians can give a hearty Amen to this truth. When we pray, we enter a realm that goes beyond the physical because we are talking to the God who created everything. What we gain from that is more than knowledge, it is deep insight into who God is and how he works in the world. The best kind of prayer changes us from the inside out as we learn what it means to say from the heart, "Thy will be done." ([The Positive Power of Prayer](#))

Insight (sakal) means to act with insight, to be prudent, to give insight. Insight refers to the the capacity to gain an accurate and deep understanding of something.

Understanding (**biynah/binah**) refers to knowledge superior to mere gathering of data. Webster defines understanding as the power of comprehending; especially the capacity to apprehend general relations of particulars, The faculty of the human mind by which it apprehends the real state of things presented to it, or by which it receives or comprehends the ideas which others express and intend to communicate. (1828 Webster)

In chapter 1 we read that...

And as for every matter of wisdom and **understanding** (**biynah/binah**) about which the king consulted them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and conjurers who were in all his realm. And Daniel continued until the first year of Cyrus the king. (Da 1:20, 21)

In chapter 10 Daniel uses this same word to record that

he understood the message and had an **understanding** (**biynah/binah**) of the vision. (Da 10:1)

The angel **Gabriel** carried out the same function in Daniel 8...

And I heard the voice of a man between the banks of Ulai, and he called out and said, "Gabriel, give this man an understanding of the vision." (Daniel 8:16)

Guzik...

In his prayer, Daniel didn't ask for understanding. His prayer demonstrated that his heart was close to God's heart, so God will reveal much to Daniel as His friend (John 15:15).

Daniel studied the passage in Jeremiah, but still didn't understand much In this case, understanding came more through prayer.

"All students of the word will tell you that when the hammers of learning and biblical criticism have failed to break open a flinty text, oftentimes prayer has done it, and nuggets of gold have been found concealed therein. To every student of the word of God who would become a well-instructed scribe we would say, with all the means which you employ, with all your searchings of the commentaries, with all your diggings into the original, with all your researches among learned divines, mingle much fervent prayer. (Spurgeon)

"**Luther** affirmeth that he oft got more spiritual light by some one ardent prayer than ever he could do by the reading of many books, or by the most accurate meditation thereupon. (Trapp)

Daniel 9:23 "At the beginning of your supplications the command was issued, and I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed; so give heed to the message and gain understanding of the vision.

- **Beginning:** Da 10:12
- **for you are:** Da 10:11,19 Lk 1:28
- **highly esteemed:** Heb. a man of desires, Song 7:10 Eze 24:16 26:12
- **Gave me instruction:** Da 9:24-27 8:16 10:21 Zec 1:9,14 6:4,5 Rev 4:1
- [Daniel 9 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

At the beginning of your supplications - God describes what communication with Him will be like in the future millennial kingdom...

It will also come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are still speaking, I will hear. (Isa 65:23)

The command was issued - Presumably from God.

You are highly esteemed - This Hebrew adjective chamudah is used three times to describe God's servant Daniel! (Da 9:23, 10:11, 10:19). This is rendered variously as - "Precious treasure". "Very precious" (NLT) "Great value" (NET). "Greatly beloved" (KJV).

Guzik quips...

Both Daniel and the Apostle John (John 13:23) were noted for their love-relationship with God. Both Daniel and John were also noted for receiving amazing prophetic messages.

Daniel had just considered a set of "sevens" upon the nation of Israel - the 70 years of promised captivity prophesied by Jeremiah. It is as if God said through Gabriel,

**"I'll show you some 'sevens'
that will really blow your mind."**

When we seek God diligently, we often receive more than we ask for.

F B Meyer (Our Daily Homily) has the following devotional on Daniel 9:23...

**At the beginning of your supplications
the command was issued**

This is always so. Directly a God-given prayer is uttered, the commandment goes forth. There is a sense, indeed, in which true prayer is the anticipation in the human heart of the Divine intention: "Before they call I will answer; and whilst they are yet speaking I will hear." (Isa 65:24) Does it seem as though your prayer were like

a ship lost at sea, which brings no cargo home? Dare to believe that the commandment did go forth, though as yet it has not reached you. It is operating; and before long you shall see the result. "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye have received them." The answer may not have come to hand, but it has been granted. Even if you do not live to see the answer, dare to believe that it is assured.

What a tender address is this— "greatly beloved"! And the margin says very precious. Is it really so, that we are very precious to God? To those who believe, Christ is precious; but how wonderful that they should be amongst his jewels, who were born of the first Adam, and have cost so much pain and sorrow by their sins! There is no accounting for love. Directly love begins to enumerate the reasons for its attachment, it ceases to be true love. Love knows no law except the drawing of an inward affinity. So Jesus draws near to us. We are very precious to Him. To have our love well compensates Him for all his bitter sorrow. Let us be very careful not to hurt Him, or give Him needless grief. And when we pray, let it be with the assurance that He bends over us and says, "Thou art greatly beloved; ask what thou wilt." As soon as the child of God says "Father," the whole Godhead is quick to hear his request.

Continued in....

- Daniel 9:24 Commentary
- Daniel 9:25 Commentary
- Daniel 9:26 Commentary
- Daniel 9:27 Commentary