

THE BOOK OF DANIEL

Chapter 9 – Part 1

- Because of the dual nature of this chapter we are going to divide it into those two sections. This first section will contain verses 1-19, the prayer of Daniel. Part 2 of this chapter study will contain the last eight verses of chapter 9, which contain the famously referenced “Daniel’s 70 weeks” (v. 24-27)
- When most study this chapter, their focus is on the prophecy of the “70 Weeks” (literally 70 sevens). While this is a very important prophetic message, it should not overshadow what can be learned from Daniel’s prayer. This is one of the reasons we are separating this study.
- Daniel was reading the book of Jeremiah and understood that the period of ordained captivity is 70 years. That time is over, and Daniel wants to know what is next. He pleads for God to restore His glory to Jerusalem. We should also remember that Daniel has been shaken and disturbed by the visions and prophecies in chapters 7 and 8. He is concerned about the future of Israel.
- Our points in this lesson will all focus on what we can learn from Daniel regarding prayer.



PRAYER POINT 1: When in question, ask God. Every time, for anything. Like Daniel, when we read something we don’t quite understand in His Word, God delights in revealing the answers to us through His Holy Spirit, our best teacher. And for all of life’s decisions, remember to seek His counsel first.

PRAYER POINT 2: Be purposeful about prayer. Daniel planned for this prayer time through his fasting and wearing of sackcloth. This was no impromptu “arrow” prayer for him. It was also not a “rote” prayer, something memorized and repeated to God in ritual. Prayer is real, and with purpose. Daniel understood this. He took time to prepare and have purpose in his prayer.

PRAYER POINT 3: Approach God with the right attitude. Serious prayers or even just “conversation” we must never forget who God is. He is El Elyon, the Most High God. He is Sovereign. He is so much bigger and majestic than we can imagine. We cannot approach a holy God without the right covering (the blood of Jesus first) and the right attitude. In the case of specific intercession and prayers of pleading on our own behalf or for others, the added steps of fasting and other personal preparation may be helpful to get our attitudes right before Him.

PRAYER POINT 4: Get right with God. Confession is a big part of this (point 3 above is the other part). Confession is not just about rattling off our long laundry list of sins. It is truly being sorrowful over those sins, regretting them “big time” and having a repentant heart. Our sins stand in the way of any requests we wish to make of God, and before He can hear us, we must be covered with the cleansing blood of His Son, available through repentant confession.

PRAYER POINT 5: Understand who God is. It is important to completely understand the nature of the God we approach. He is a God of mercy, but He is also a God of justice (and wrath, if called for). He is awesome, beyond our comprehension. There is nothing impossible to Him, and He expects certain things of us. We must approach God with this understanding, and it is important to acknowledge this in our prayers. Praising Him and His attributes is an important part of prayer. Prayer is not just asking, it is telling our awesome God that we know Him and love Him.

PRAYER POINT 6: Serious prayer should involve sacrifice. Daniel fasted and denied himself food for this intercession. Fasting is a prayer concept found throughout the scriptures. Not all prayer requires fasting, though it is often useful for intercession. God also gives us the concept of the “sacrifice of praise.” Hebrews 13:15 states *“Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.”* We can also call this praise a “thank offering.” In the days of the Tabernacle and the Temple, God’s people could only approach Him with an offering. Today we can approach Him because we are covered by the blood of the Eternal Sacrifice, Jesus Himself. But God also desires our sacrifice, which is hearts, our thanks, our praises. Sacrifice implies denying ourselves, or bringing something of value to God. The thing He values most is our hearts, completely given to Him. The sacrifice of praise means that we deny ourselves any praise, and give it all to Him. It is indeed all about Him, not about us.

PRAYER POINT 7: Prayer is personal, and requires a personal relationship with God. Throughout the book of Daniel it is obvious that Daniel knows God well. He has a personal relationship with Him. Many people can’t believe that is possible. But it is, and it *must* be. That relationship for us, on this side of the cross, is through His Son, Yeshua. God knows us personally, and we need to know Him personally. That means a relationship. Daniel’s prayers were very personal.

PRAYER POINT 8: Acknowledge, and “own” the truth of any given situation, or any given sin. In order to receive forgiveness for ourselves or others, we must understand, acknowledge and be accountable for our sins. We must understand, and show God that we know, that the relationship is broken and we are responsible for that. In the case of intercession for something other than forgiveness, the truth we must recognize and acknowledge is the fact that only God can do what we are asking. We need Him to intervene; we need Him to correct what is wrong because we can’t. We *need* His mercy, but we do not deserve it.

PRAYER POINT 9: Be honest and straightforward. We cannot hide anything from God. He sees our hearts and knows us better than we do. He knows more about any given situation than we do. He is fully aware of the truth. Daniel honestly and candidly admitted the sins of Israel before God, in a very emotional heartfelt way. Daniel’s grasp on reality is plain here, as well as his sorrow over it. This honesty and straightforward approach applies to both our confession, and to our requests. Don’t dance around the bush, and don’t apply generic requests. Pray specifically, confess specifically.

PRAYER POINT 10: Desire that God is glorified. Whatever we pray for, we should also desire that through the answers, our God is glorified, that He is given the credit, that His reputation is known and increased in the world. Even when our sins are forgiven, God is glorified when we live repentant and obedient lives in this world. In a miraculous situation, in any answer to prayer when God delivers, He is glorified when the world knows of His mighty deeds. Glorifying God is our purpose here. It is interesting to note that the Greek word for “glory” is *doxa*, which has to do with revealing and knowing the reputation and character of someone. It is their honor or renown. When God is glorified, He is known for who He really is. His character and reputation are known. We should desire the world knows God, He is “glorified” through our prayer requests. Daniel’s first request was that God be glorified again in Israel and Jerusalem.



DANIEL’S LESSONS ON PRAYER

1. WHEN IN QUESTION, ASK GOD.
2. BE PURPOSEFUL ABOUT PRAYER.
3. APPROACH GOD WITH THE RIGHT ATTITUDE.
4. GET RIGHT WITH GOD.
5. UNDERSTAND WHO GOD IS.
6. SERIOUS PRAYER SHOULD INVOLVE SACRIFICE.
7. PRAYER IS PERSONAL, AND REQUIRES A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.
8. ACKNOWLEDGE, AND “OWN” THE TRUTH OF ANY GIVEN SITUATION, OR ANY GIVEN SIN.
9. BE HONEST AND STRAIGHTFORWARD.
10. DESIRE THAT GOD IS GLORIFIED.

