

“PRAYING THAT CHANGES HISTORY”

Text: Jeremiah 29:10; Daniel 9: 1-24

Subject: “How Your Prayers Will Effect Eternity”

Introduction

1. Daniel was born about 620 B.C.
2. He was four years old at the time of the great revival in Judah under King Josiah (II Chron. 34).
3. Daniel was 10 years old when Josiah (Judah’s good king) died.
4. Daniel was about 15 years old when he was carried off to Babylon in 605 B.C.
5. He was deported to Babylon with a number of Jews.
6. Daniel and his friends stayed together during this time.
7. God blessed Daniel’s integrity by giving him important places of service under four different rulers:
 - His character was above reproach.
 - He was asked to serve in the court of the king.
 - He wasn’t afraid to reprove Babylon’s two kings (Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar).
 - He purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself. (Daniel 1:8)
 - He teaches us that our prayers can change history.

(Chapter 9 is an awesome revelation)

1. Daniel is a student of prophecy.
2. He is studying the prophecies of Jeremiah.
3. In verse 2, Daniel discovers that the appointed period of seventy years is almost over.
4. He understands that Israel’s deliverance and restoration is close at hand.
5. Daniel sets his heart to fast and pray as never before:
 - His job as a statesman and prime minister cannot keep him from prayer.
 - His surroundings of seductions in a luxurious court cannot turn him aside from fasting and prayer.
 - His vocation in life, his position and his financial status are all secondary to the ministry of prayer and fasting.

(Daniel Chapter 9 has three revelations)

I. The Problems Of Israel (Vs. 1-15)

- In verse 2, God was confirming His word given to Jeremiah.
 - Daniel was reading Jeremiah 25 and understood that the 70 years of Jewish captivity would soon end.
 - Daniel is now over 80 years old.
 - He is broken hearted over Israel’s condition.
1. Daniel was aware of Israel’s past failures.
 2. Daniel was aware of the reasons behind the captivity.
 3. Daniel was aware of Israel’s long continued sin, rebellion and backsliding.

4. Daniel was aware that Israel's unbelief could stop their progress again.
5. Daniel was aware that it was time to pray so that God would intervene:

- (v. 5) "We have sinned and committed iniquity."
- (v. 6) "We haven't listened to the prophets."
- (v. 7) "We have trespassed against thee."
- (v. 8) "We are confused because of our sin."
- (v. 10) "We haven't obeyed the voice of God."
- (v. 11) "We've all transgressed the law."
- (v. 13) "We have failed to pray in all of our trouble."

(What's the problem?)

- The problem is that the Jews and Jerusalem need to be restored.
- The problem is that God's glory was missing and it was time for intervention.
- The problem is, God's favor can be returned, but someone has to pray!
 1. Someone has to feel what God feels!
 2. Someone has to see what God sees!
 3. Someone has to cooperate with God so that God can do what he promised He will do.

(What a discovery here)

- That Daniel's praying doesn't twist God's arm to do something he is reluctant to do.
- But praying is simply aligning me with God (so that God can do what He wanted to do all along).
- In Jeremiah 29:10 God said; "*After 70 years be accomplished at Babylon, I will visit you and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place.*"

(I discover)

1. That God said he would deliver Israel out of Babylon. (That's God's part).
2. But it was necessary for someone to pray it into being. (That's Daniel's part.)

(In other words)

- God will do what he promised he would do, but
- God does it in cooperation with our willingness to pray. **(In other words)**
- God needs prayer and fasting to get the job done.
- If I fail to fast and pray, then I forfeit what God said he would do.
- God has no problem saving people, he's waiting for us to cooperate and pray as a part of the process of God.

(#1 – The Problem of Israel)

II. The Praying Of Daniel (vs. 3, 16-19)

Question: How does Daniel pray so that God listens?

Question: How do I pray so that God will listen?

Question: How can my praying affect history right here in _____
and beyond? (Your country and state)

(It's no ordinary Jimmy prayer)

"Hello God, my name is Jimmy, I'm in a hurry, I'll take what you gimmy."

(Let's discover prayer that works)

1. There must be focus (v. 3)

"And I set my face unto the Lord God."

- This is intensity and determination in prayer.
- This earnestness and steadfastness in prayer.
- This is refusal to be distracted or discouraged in the face of opposition, resistance, dryness. etc.

Question: How many of you are willing to set your face unto the Lord God alone?

2. There must be fasting and prayer: (v. 3)

"To seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting."

- Prayer and fasting will narrow your interests.
- Prayer and fasting will prepare your heart.
- Prayer and fasting will arrest God's attention.
- Prayer and fasting will soften any hardness.
- Prayer and fasting will overcome and enable you to "lock in" with God while others float along and waste the day.

3. There must be brokenness: (v. 5)

"We have sinned and committed iniquity...and have departed from you."

- Daniel was broken hearted over what he saw.
- God's Holy Mountain (Jerusalem) was in desolation.
- The city of Zion was quiet.
- The Temple was in ruins and worship had halted.
- The solemn feasts were history, the sanctuary was empty and the altar was vacant.
- Daniel knows that his prayers can make difference.
- And God wants us to know, that our prayers can affect history in _____.

(Your city)

4. There was humility and repentance in prayer. (v. 5)

(v. 5) *"We have sinned."* (v. 3) *"Sackcloth and ashes."*

- Daniel includes himself in the prayer, "We have sinned."
- (v. 8) "It's us Lord, we have sinned."
- (v. 13) "We made not our prayer before the Lord."
- Progress in prayer and fasting will remove the pride and see its own weaknesses.

(Notice v. 16)

- As Daniel humbles himself, he prays unselfishly.
 1. He pleads for Jerusalem
 2. He pleads for the sanctuary
 3. He pleads for the Holy Mountain
 4. He pleads for God's people

(Daniel is personally in luxury and comfort, but he puts himself in the gap for others!)

(v. 17) “Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant.”

(v. 18) “Incline thine ear and hear; open your eyes and behold us. **(Why?)**

(v. 18) “...Because we pray not for our righteousness, but for your name sake.”

(v. 19) “Hear, forgive, hearken, do it, defer not Lord.”

(In other words, “It’s time Lord to answer prayer”)

III. The Power Of God In Answer To Prayer (vs. 20-27)

(v. 20) “And while I was speaking and praying and confessing sin and presenting my supplication before the Lord...”

(v. 21) “Yea, while I was speaking in prayer.” **(What happens?)**

(v. 23) “At the beginning of thy supplications Daniel, the commandment came forth from God to answer prayer.”

(What did Daniel pray for?)

- He had prayed that God would visit and restore Jerusalem **(How did God answer?)**
- God promised to restore Jerusalem (but also promised a great deal besides).
- Daniel got far more than he prayed for.
 1. God not only promised to restore Jerusalem but,
 2. God also promised the Messiah Himself would come and inhabit His church (that’s us today).

Question: What should happen in church when this Jesus is born and established His church?

Answer: What should happen now is what Jesus came to do.

(What is it?)

It’s the ministry of Jesus listed in v. 24 in answer to prayer

1. Sin’s Power Will Be Broken (v. 24)

“...To finish the transgression” means:

- Jesus would break sin’s power to rule you.
- Jesus would no longer allow sin to prevail over you (and control you).

2. Sin’s Penalty Will Be Paid (v. 24)

“...To make reconciliation or iniquity” means:

- Forgiveness has cancelled your sentence.
- All guilt has been removed for good.
- Every sin has been cast into the depths of the sea.

3. Your Righteousness Has Been Secured (v. 24)

“To bring in everlasting righteousness” means:

- We’ve been given total acceptance with God.
- We are no longer at distance with God.
- We’ve been given a white robe of the righteousness of Jesus.
- We now have right standing with God.

4. **We Have The Guarantee Of The word Of God**

“...And to seal up the vision and prophecy” means:

- Every prophecy of Jesus will be fulfilled.
- Every word of God will prove true.
- Every promise of God is yea and Amen!

5. **We Have A Fresh Anointing That Flows From Jesus**

“...And to anoint the most Holy” means:

- Reference to the New Testament church that Messiah was to establish (us today).
- God here promises to anoint the New Testament church.
 - This anointing began on the Day of Pentecost,
 - This anointing continues on even now.
- *“Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you.”*
- *“Tarry until ye be endued with power from on High.”*
- *“Be not drunk with wine, but be filled with the Holy Spirit.”*
- *“He who hath anointed us is God.”*
- *“Ye have an unction from the Holy One.”*
- *“God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power.”*
- *“This same anointing teaches you of all things and is truth and is no lie.”*

Conclusion

(Pastor, what’s the big deal about Daniel Chapter 9?)

- No other chapter in the Bible teaches more clearly how your prayers and your fasting can affect eternity.
1. When Daniel first came to Babylon as a teenager (it was his praying that changed the heart of King Nebuchadnezzar).
 - ◆ His praying obtained favor for the Jews in Babylon.
 - ◆ His praying obtained promotion for the Jews in Babylon.
 2. At the end of Daniel’s life (it was his fasting and praying that opened the door for Israel to be restored to their land).
 - ◆ For nearly 70 years, the destiny of God’s people can be traced to Daniel’s praying.
 - ◆ For nearly 70 years, Daniel prayed (and fasted) and affected Israel for eternity.

(How come?)

1. Because God’s work and God’s will in heaven are accomplished by prayer and fasting on earth.
2. Because you have power with God to affect history and eternity when you are on your knees!!

Amen
Bill Kirk