



Learning from Daniel's Letter

By

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Have you ever prayed and prayed and prayed and prayed about something important and wondered if God even heard you? Daniel was a man just like us – loved by God and called to serve Him. Daniel prayed earnestly about the pitiful condition of Jerusalem and its people. Daniel asked God to turn away His anger and wrath from Jerusalem.

“Now therefore, our God, hear the prayer of Your servant, and his supplications, and for the Lord’s sake cause Your face to shine on Your sanctuary, which is desolate. 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 do not present our supplications before You because of our righteous deeds, but because of Your great mercies. O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and act! Do not delay for Your own sake, my God, for Your city and Your people are called by Your name.” Daniel 9:17-19

I can only imagine the depth of feeling Daniel presented in his prayers to God. I’m sure each of us has felt deeply and emotionally in many of our prayers: maybe some you’ve prayed recently. Our minds tell us to be patient and wait for His answer, but our hearts sometimes cry out for God’s quick response. Does He not hear us? Does He not care that we suffer?

Gabriel the angel came to Daniel as he was praying. Gabriel spoke to Daniel and gave him wonderful news and powerful insight for all of God’s people.

“And he informed *me*, and talked with me, and said, “O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to understand. At the beginning of your supplications the command went out, and I have come to tell *you*, for you *are* greatly beloved; therefore consider the matter, and understand the vision.” Daniel 9:22-23

What a marvelous insight to prayer! “At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth.” God heard Daniel’s earnest plea from the “beginning” of his supplications and sent Gabriel to instruct him about what would happen in the future. That leads us to the next logical question: why did it take so long for Daniel to receive an answer to his prayer? If God hears from the beginning and sends an answer, why don’t we get the answer immediately?

We learn more in the next chapter. Daniel spent three weeks praying and mourning. He didn’t eat any food or taste any wine. He didn’t anoint himself. At the end of three weeks, Daniel saw a great angel in a vision. The angel spoke to him:

“O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent . . . Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty day: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia. Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people

in the latter days: for yet the vision is for many days.” Daniel
10:11-14

God heard Daniel’s prayer from the first day he prayed. He sent an angel to give Daniel an answer to his prayers. However, the “prince of the kingdom of Persia” withstood the angel for three weeks. Michael came to the other angel’s aid. It was after that the angel made his way to Daniel through a vision.

I believe most of us are not aware often enough of what we’re doing in prayer. We are talking to God through spiritual means and He hears us from the first time we pray. Our prayers sometimes shake the spirit world and lead to great interventions and battles that are difficult for us to comprehend. We often pray and walk away to do something else. We sometimes pray for long periods of time and return again and again to that same prayer. We are sometimes fervent in prayer. What we may not realize is that we are also effectual in prayer. God hears us and sends His answer. In Daniel’s case, the answer was futurist. God was going to do great things for Israel, but not right away. That may be God’s answer to some of our prayers. But the point is that God hears and answers and the answer is on its way to us. Continue in your prayers with thanksgiving. Don’t give up hope or your zeal for the Lord’s Work. It is the greatest work on earth. There is no other occupation, vocation or service to compare with the Lord’s Work.

Notice that when Daniel prayed he prayed: “for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great

mercies.” Daniel’s heart was right with God. That made his desires right. Daniel prayed for the Lord’s sake rather than his own. What was good for God was what was important to Daniel.

Paul taught us to pray: “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:6-7) Don’t be anxious (careful) for anything, but in everything through our prayers and earnest supplications with a heart and spirit filled with thanksgiving we share our requests with God. What happens? God’s Peace keeps and guards our hearts and our minds through the Lord Jesus Christ.

We may not hear answers from God right away. We may not get the kind of response from God we want. But know that He hears you as soon as you pray and He sends an answer. It may be delayed in the spirit world as Satan and his powers and rulers of darkness oppose God’s Will, but the answer will come. When we receive God’s answer, know it is the right answer and will be a blessing to us and the people we love. In the meantime, while we wait, enjoy God’s peace and the security He gives us in our thoughts and emotions through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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