



# Community Group Discussion Guide

Daniel's Prayer – Weekend of March 23-24, 2019

## I. Starter Question:

Who was the first to lead you in “saying prayers”? How did you learn to pray? When did it turn to becoming conversational with God?

## II. Discussion of Scripture:

**Daniel 9: 1-16 (ESV):** In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, by descent a Mede, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans— 2in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, perceived in the books the number of years that, according to the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet, must pass before the end of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years. 3Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking him by prayer and pleas for mercy with fasting and sackcloth and ashes. 4 I prayed to the LORD my God and made confession, saying, "O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, 5 we have sinned and done wrong and acted wickedly and rebelled, turning aside from your commandments and rules. 6We have not listened to your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land. 7To you, O Lord, belongs righteousness, but to us open shame, as at this day, to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to all Israel, those who are near and those who are far away, in all the lands to which you have driven them, because of the treachery that they have committed against you. 8To us, O LORD, belongs open shame, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against you. 9To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness, for we have rebelled against him 10and have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God by walking in his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets. 11All Israel has transgressed your law and turned aside, refusing to obey your voice. And the curse and oath that are written in the Law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out upon us, because we have sinned against him. 12He has confirmed his words, which he spoke against us and against our rulers who ruled us, by bringing upon us a great calamity. For under the whole heaven there has not been done anything like what has been done against Jerusalem. 13As it is written in the Law of Moses, all this calamity has come upon us; yet we have not entreated the favor of the LORD our God, turning from our iniquities and gaining insight by your truth. 14Therefore the LORD has kept ready the calamity and has brought it upon us, for the LORD our God is righteous in all the works that he has done, and we have not obeyed his voice. 15And now, O Lord our God, who brought your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and have made a name for yourself, as at this day, we have sinned, we have done wickedly.

16"O Lord, according to all your righteous acts, let your anger and your wrath turn away from your city Jerusalem, your holy hill, because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and your people have become a byword among all who are around us. 17Now therefore, O our God, listen to the prayer of your servant and to his pleas for mercy, and for

your own sake, O Lord, make your face to shine upon your sanctuary, which is desolate. 18O my God, incline your ear and hear. Open your eyes and see our desolations, and the city that is called by your name. For we do not present our pleas before you because of our righteousness, but because of your great mercy. 19O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive. O Lord, pay attention and act. Delay not, for your own sake, O my God, because your city and your people are called by your name."

**Brief Description:** Daniel and the Israelites have been in captivity in Babylon since 605BC when Daniel was about fifteen years old. In 539BC, the Medes overtook the Babylon Empire. Israel and Babylon became a part of the Medo-Persian Empire. Daniel's prayer in chapter nine occurs after this change of power when Cyrus/Darius is King. God has promised to defeat the Babylonians and bring His people back to Israel after 70 years (Jeremiah 25:11-12 and Jeremiah 29:10). In 2 Chronicles 36:22-23, Cyrus commands the rebuilding of the temple and the return of His people to build it. This happens after Daniel's prayer.

We know from scripture that Daniel was a godly man of prayer. Daniel 6:10 tells us that Daniel prayed three times a day, even when his life was in danger. Daniel 9:23, 10:11 and 10:19 tell us that Daniel was a man greatly loved by God.

The Israelites, however, found themselves in Babylon because of their disobedience to God (see Leviticus 26:3, 14-17, and 27). (Deut. 11:26-28)

#### **For Discussion:**

- Read the prayer aloud as a class. What are your takeaways from Daniel's prayer?
- **Prayer is done in response to God's Word. (vs.2)** Daniel knew from God's Word that things were changing. This brought him to his knees. What passages in God's Word have brought you to your knees in prayer?
- **Prayer is characterized by fervency and self-denial. (vs.3)** Daniel obviously was getting serious in prayer. He wore sackcloth and sat in ashes. Both expressions were associated with mourning in that culture. He fasted. Can you recall a time in your life, or an expression in our culture that highlights fervency and self-denial? (advent, crises of life, crises in our nation (2 Chron. 7:14)
- **Prayer worships God. (vs. 4)**
- **Prayer identifies unselfishly with God's people. (vs. 5)**
- **Prayer is humble and involves confession. (vs. 5)** Many times we skip confession or don't spend much time there. Has God brought a need for you to spend time in confession for any of the following sins?

Ungodliness	Impatience	Holding Grudges	Hostility
Anxiety	Strife	Impatience	Frustration
Anger	Resentment	Bitterness	Discontentment
Bitterness	Envy	Jealousy	Unthankfulness
Pride	Selfishness	Worldliness	Judgementalism
Sinful words	Irritability	Lack of Self-Control	

- **Prayer is specific (vs. 5-6, etc.).**
- **Prayer relies on God's character (vs. 7).**
- **Prayer expresses hope because of God (vs. 9).**
- **Prayer is more about God than us, revealing where we place our trust.**

**III. Respond in Prayer by praying following Daniel's leadership.**