

Connect360: Prayer to Heal Our Land

August 29, 2022

- *Lesson 12 in the Connect360 unit "Prayer That Moves Heaven: Power With Purpose" focuses on Daniel 9:1-23.*

The bulk of this chapter is a record of Daniel's prayer to God. Daniel began by acknowledging God as not only awesome and powerful, but also loving and gracious. This is a good model for believers to follow. Those who come to God do so both with intimacy and reverence, understanding both the goodness of God and the awesome nature of his character. A lack of reverence leads to seeing God as a buddy or "the man upstairs." A lack of intimacy leads to fearing God from a distance. A balance of both God's nearness and his vast greatness leads to a healthy view of God.

With humility, Daniel confessed the sin of his nation. He used the pronoun "we" in several statements rather than the pronoun "they." He saw his own sin as equal to that of his fellow Israelites. He knew he was just as much in need of God's grace and forgiveness as the rest of the nation. Daniel didn't complain about the people. Instead, he identified with them.

In verse 7-11, Daniel compared the sinful Israelites to a perfect and righteous God. Israel and its leaders were covered in shame because of their rebellion, but the Lord God was merciful and loving. Because of Israel's sin, Daniel said, God's judgment had been poured out on the people. God had done what he had sworn he would do. Daniel understood the reason the people of Israel had been scattered to other countries. From the ordinary citizen to the kings and princes, generations of Israelites had sinned against God.

The description of the Israelites' behavior in these verses could be applied to the United States today. From the government leadership to religious leadership, the nation has rebelled against God for generations. No one in the United States—or any other nation—is free from sin and rebellion. Scripture says all have sinned (Romans 3:23). What is different today is a lack of shame. In a world where anything goes, shame has no place, because no one regrets their actions—at least not outwardly. The idea of turning from sin and giving attention to God is a long-forgotten concept because sin is a long-forgotten concept, too.

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