

“SINNERS IN THE HANDS OF A RIGHTEOUS GOD”

Daniel 9:1-19

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INTRODUCTION

Illus: Jonathan Edwards—“Sinners in the hands of an Angry God.” [Read part of it]

Daniel’s entire prayer is built on the mercies of God: not on the merits of man. (v. 18)

Israel is unworthy: God is worthy. *Israel has sinned [cf. Rom. 3:10, 23, 27-28].*

Righteousness is from God.

Daniel’s prayer for Israel shows us what our attitude toward God must be as we approach Him.

You must know that you are totally unworthy and that you must depend totally upon God’s Mercy.

I. ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR SIN

A. The extent of Sin

1. Geographically (v. 7)

- Judah
- Jerusalem—God’s holy mountain (16)
- All Israel (& v. 11)
- Local (in Babylon) and Scattered

2. Sociologically (6, 8)

- Kings
- Princes
- Judges (v. 12)
- Fathers
- All the people

Everybody has sinned!(Rom. 3:10, 23)

B. The Nature of Sin (vv. 5-6)

1. “Sin” (“Miss the mark”—vv. 11, 15, 16)
2. “Iniquity” (“distort, act perversely”—v. 16)
3. “Do wickedly” (“do known wrong”—v. 15)
4. “Rebelled” (“defy authority”—v. 9) **Cf. bumper stickers: “Resist authority”**
5. “Transgression” (“Step across a boundary”—v. 11)
6. “Unfaithfulness” (“Treachery”—lit. “treacherous sins done treacherously”—v. 7)
7. “Disobedience” (vv. 10, 11; cf. “not hearing”—v. 14)
8. “Turning aside” (vv. 5, 11; turning aside in heart leads to disobedience)

We have fully sinned; and we are totally depraved in our natural state outside Christ.

C. The Basis of sin [**Violation of God’s Revealed Truth—v. 13**]

1. Violation of Mosaic Law (vv, 11, 12, 13—cf. Rom. 3:19-20); see v. 5—His “commands and ordinances”. **Sin is determined by God’s Authority.**
2. Ignoring the Words of the Prophets (6, 10)
 - They spoke in God’s Name (v. 6).
 - They were God’s voice (v. 10).
 - He gave His teachings through them (v. 10).
3. Note the “Law and the Prophets” agree; both Moses (v. 11) and the Prophets (v. 10) are God’s “Servants.”

WHEN WE DEPART FROM GOD’S WORD WE BRING ABOUT MORAL DISORDER.

God is righteous (7, 14); We who violate His Word deserve punishment and discipline.

Illus: Have you ever said or thought: “God, give me what I deserve?” You know what that is, right? Eternal punishment in Hell!

D. Results of Sin

1. “Open Shame” (v. 7, v. 8—Lit. “shame of face”; cf. “reproach” in v. 16)
Note: “To thee belongs Righteousness”; “to us belongs open shame.”
2. Captivity (v. 7; God drove them into various countries, near and far.) *God’s judgment was classless—extending to all who were guilty!*
3. “The curse and the oath” (v. 11; see Dt. 28:15ff—the curse is solemnized by an oath)
It is “poured out”—meaning abundance, like a rain of fire.
4. “Great Calamity”(vv. 12, 13, 14)
 - Unique—v. 12, because of Israel’s special relation to the Lord
 - Fulfillment of God’s Word –v. 13
 - Watched over by God—v. 14; **God is careful to bring justice.**

NO ONE OF US CAN BE SAVED UNTIL WE FULLY RECOGNIZE THE DEPTH AND TRUE NATURE OF OUR SIN, AND ALSO OUR DESERVED PUNISHMENT.

Then, what can we do? The same thing that Daniel did: Plead for mercy!

II. PLEAD FOR MERCY [But, upon what basis can we plead for mercy? We can plead for mercy upon the basis of:]

A. God’s Nature: Possibility of the Plea

1. He is Righteous (v. 7, 12, 14)
 - He stands by His Word (v. 12) and confirms it--“causes it to stand.”
 - He is right in **all His deeds**—v. 14; the people were forewarned.
 - He has acted for His people in the past—vv. 15, 16, having **brought Israel out of Egypt with a mighty hand and made a name for Himself.**
 - This fact **implies an ATONEMENT** that satisfies His justice, and makes mercy possible; thus His anger can turn away (v. 16) because His justice has been satisfied!
 - His past acts include gracious deliverance—so now!

- Israel needs vindication against the wicked; so do we against Satan! God’s name, people, and city and under reproach (v. 16). **So is Christ’s finished atonement against the forces of iniquity.**
2. He is Compassionate (vv. 9, 18)
 - Compassion “belongs” to Him (v. 9—the word is plural, showing intensity)
 - His compassion is “great”—v. 18.
 3. He is Forgiving (v. 9—Again plural, showing intensity)
[But we also can plead for mercy upon the basis of”]
- B. God’s Action—The prospect of His response to our pleas for mercy
1. “For His Name” (vv. 15, 18, 19);
 - Note in v. 15 “he made a name for” Himself.
 - Note in vv. 18, 19 that His people and His city are called by His name.
 - a. His people
 - Daniel is His servant (v. 17—and is precious to God)
 - His “people” had been redeemed by Him—v. 15
 - Now they are a reproach—v. 16
 - Now they are desolate—v. 18
 - **God’s reputation is at stake.**
 - **So with us, His reputation is at stake if He does not redeem and restore His elect!**
 - b. His city—It is His holy mountain
 - Because He dwells there in the temple
 - His honor is at stake!
 2. For His own Sake (17, 19)—*because He is the Lord—Yahweh of His covenant and Word.*

CONCLUSION

Our hope is found in God’s mercy (v. 18), not in our merits.

See Titus 3:5; Eph. 2:8-9; Rom. 3:28, 24, 26.

What do we need to do: v. 13?

1. “Soften His face”—i.e. “seek His favor.”
2. Turn from iniquity.
3. Give attention to the Truth.

Then

4. Love Him, and keep His commands (v. 4)

Do not say: “But I’m basically a good person; I’ve done some good things for God.”

See Matthew 7:22.