

SERMON OUTLINE

SERMON TITLE: A Prayer for America

SERMON REFERENCE: Daniel 9:1-19

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #2311

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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) Our nation is in crisis.
 - i) Prayer is our greatest resource.
 - ii) God is our sure defense and our hope.
- b) The prophet Daniel prayed in a time of national calamity, and God heard his prayer.
- c) Daniel 9:1-8
 - i) Daniel had been reading the prophet Jeremiah.
 - (1) Jeremiah told how God was going to bring the Babylonians against His ancient people.
 - (a) Babylon today is known as Iraq.
 - ii) But God had a plan for His people and would bring them back again into the land and restore them.
- d) God does bring judgment upon sin.
- e) God has a plan, though His plan may seem to take a long time to work out.
 - i) God may seem to let evil succeed, but it is only temporary.
- f) The hour in America is desperate.
 - i) It is time for the saints of our Lord Jesus Christ to wake up and be called to serious prayer.
 - (1) Only believing, repenting prayer can hold back the floodtides of judgment and sin and release the cleansing power of the Lord Jesus upon our personal lives and our nation.
- g) Today's message will help us learn to pray in a special way.
 - i) Not ordinary prayer but extraordinary prayer; prayer that can touch the heart of God.

2) WE ARE TO PRAY WITH SERIOUS CONCENTRATION (DANIEL 9:3)

- a) Have you ever set your face in prayer?
 - i) Have you desperately sought the Lord?
 - (1) It's not the arithmetic of our prayers; how many prayers we pray.
 - (2) It's not the rhetoric of our prayer; how eloquent or beautiful it may be.
 - (3) It's not the geometry of our prayer; how long our prayer may be.
 - (4) It's not the emotion of our prayer; how sweet our prayer is.
 - (5) It's not the logic of our prayer; how argumentative our prayer is.
 - (6) It is the faith and fervency of our prayer that gets to God.
- b) Oftentimes we are simply playing church.
 - i) We witness without tears.
 - ii) We pray without fasting.
 - iii) Is it any wonder then that we sow without reaping and have so little power in our lives?
- c) Prayer and fasting are the order of the day.
 - i) Daniel 9:3
- d) In New Testament times, Jesus expects us to pray.
 - i) Matthew 6:5

- e) Matthew 6:16
 - i) In this passage, Jesus assumed that we would fast, just as He assumed that we would pray.
 - ii) We should not fast and pray to be seen of men; we should fast and pray with the right motivation.
- f) What is fasting?
 - i) Fasting is going without food and other pleasures for a spiritual purpose.
 - (1) Fasting is not merely going without food for health reasons.
 - ii) The Bible always links fasting with spiritual purposes.
 - (1) Watching and fasting.
 - (2) Prayer and fasting.
 - (3) Worshipping and fasting.
- g) It is possible to fast for the wrong motivations.
 - i) There are certain things we should avoid when fasting:
 - (1) Avoid exhibitionism.
 - (a) Matthew 6:16
 - (2) Avoid legalism.
 - (a) We shouldn't get the idea that we can buy a blessing from God or that somehow God is obligated to us if we fast.
 - (3) Avoid ritualism.
 - (a) Some people fast ritualistically.
 - (b) Jesus told about a tax collector who boasted to the Lord that he fasted twice a week, but Jesus indicated that this man did not understand what real spiritual religion is.
 - (i) Luke 18:11-14
 - (4) Avoid asceticism.
 - (a) The devil would like to make us a type of religious recluse, but Biblical New Testament Christianity does not make us some sort of a holy hermit.
 - (b) We do not have to go off somewhere to fast.
 - (5) Avoid egotism.
 - (a) Do not swell up with pride because you fast.
 - (i) Luke 18:11-12
 - (b) Fasting must be done unto the Lord.
 - (c) Zechariah 7:5
- h) What will fasting do?
 - i) Fasting will strengthen your prayer.
 - (1) Joel 2:12
 - (2) Turn to God with all of your heart.
 - (a) Fasting shows that we have put our heart into it.
 - (3) Jeremiah 29:13
 - (4) When we fast, we're giving Heaven notice that we mean business.
 - ii) Fasting brings faith into focus.

- (1) It is like having a spiritual string tied around our finger, and every hunger pain reminds us that we're to seek the face of God.
- iii) Fasting subdues self.
 - (1) We don't know how to say "no" to ourselves, and the Bible links pride with fullness of bread.
 - (a) Ezekiel 16:49
- iv) Fasting will stay the judgment of God.
 - (1) Sometimes the wrath of God, the anger of God and the righteous judgment of God comes against a nation; but if that nation will fast and pray, God will withhold His judgment.
 - (2) Jonah 3:5, 10
 - (a) Nineveh was the capital city of the ancient empire of Assyria, but God wanted to forgive.
 - (3) God is a God of righteousness, judgment and justice; but God had rather show mercy than to send judgment.
 - (4) Jeremiah 18:7-8
 - (a) God is not just talking about the nation of Israel in this passage, but He's talking about nations in general.
- v) Fasting stops the enemy of God.
 - (1) 2 Chronicles 20:3-4, 29
 - (2) We are in a cosmic battle; we're not in a battle against flesh and blood.
 - (a) We're in a battle against principalities and powers.
 - (b) Ephesians 6:12
 - (3) Prayer is like a missile that cannot be shot down, and it can go anywhere.
- vi) Fasting seeks guidance.
 - (1) If you want to know the will of God, then fast and pray.
 - (2) Acts 13:2
 - (3) One reason why the early church grew as rapidly as it did was because they were serious in prayer.
 - (a) They believed that God could do what they could not do.
- vii) Fasting shatters strongholds.
 - (1) People have strongholds of fear, bitterness, resentment and habits.
 - (2) Fasting can demolish the strongholds that the enemy has put into our lives.
 - (3) Isaiah 58:6
- i) How should we fast?
 - i) Examine your motivation.
 - (1) Ask God about it.
 - (2) Don't fast out of legalism.
 - (3) Prayerfully choose your own fast.
 - (a) The Bible gives no rules about fasting.
 - (i) It doesn't say when to start or stop fasting.
 - ii) Avoid extremism.

- (1) A one day fast is a good start.
 - (2) Choose your fast upon a day when you can give yourself to seeking the Lord.
 - (3) Fasting is to be linked with prayer, worship and spiritual exercise.
 - (4) A normal fast is doing without food but normally taking some water.
 - (5) When you break your fast, break it by eating lightly.
 - (6) Talk to your doctor before fasting if you take medication, are pregnant, or have other health concerns.
- iii) Avoid bragging about fasting.
- (1) We become like hypocrites if we brag about our fast.
- 3) WE ARE TO PRAY WITH STEADFAST CONFIDENCE (DANIEL 9:4)
- a) In serious times, we need to learn to glance at our problem and gaze at our God.
 - b) Daniel's prayer was saturated in confidence in Almighty God.
 - i) Daniel 9:4
 - ii) Daniel 9:7
 - iii) Daniel 9:9
 - iv) Daniel 9:14
 - (1) In his prayer, Daniel is talking about God's greatness, God's awe, God's power, His righteousness, and His mercy.
 - c) It is impossible to see who our great God is in a time of crisis and not want to pray.
 - d) The basis of Daniel's prayer to our great God was the shed blood of Jesus Christ.
 - i) Daniel 9:20-21
 - (1) The evening oblation was the time when the sacrifices were made in the temple.
 - (2) The temple had been destroyed for almost seventy years when Daniel prayed this prayer, but he had it in his memory.
 - (3) The evening oblation was between 3:00 PM and 4:00 PM.
 - (a) The Bible calls this the "ninth hour."
 - (4) This is a prophecy of Jesus Christ upon the cross.
 - (a) Matthew 27:46
 - (5) Daniel was looking back to a bloody sacrifice.
 - (a) In New Testament times, we look back to an even greater sacrifice: the shed blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
 - e) We come to God, not with the brass of our emotions or the pewter of our self-worth, but with the gold of His glory and the incense of His mighty name.
- 4) WE ARE TO PRAY WITH SINCERE CONFESSION (DANIEL 9:4-14)
- a) Daniel confessed both personal and national sins.
 - i) He confessed personal sins.

- (1) The Bible does not mention any sin that Daniel ever committed.
 - (a) There is no sin listed against Joseph or Daniel in the Bible.
 - (b) Romans 3:23
 - (2) Daniel was a godly man, and he confessed his sin.
 - (3) Many of us sit in church and wonder if those old sinners in America will get right with God.
 - (a) The closer we get to God, the more we realize how insignificant and sinful we ourselves are.
 - (b) This is not a time for finger-pointing in America.
 - (i) This is a time for repentance of personal sin.
 - (4) 1 Peter 4:17
 - ii) He also confessed national sins.
 - (1) Daniel confessed the sin of his people Israel, and he realized that Israel was in difficulty because of national sin.
 - (2) God had brought the Babylonians against Israel, but that did not mean that He was on the side of the Babylonians.
 - (a) Isaiah 10:5
 - (b) God brought judgment against His ancient people because of their sin.
 - (i) This does not mean that God doesn't love His people.
 - (3) America has national sins that we need to confess:
 - (a) Our pride in materialism
 - (b) Our neglect of the poor and needy
 - (c) Racism
 - (d) Sexual immorality
 - (e) Abortion
 - (f) Godless humanism
 - b) We can confess our personal sin and be sure that God will forgive us.
 - i) 1 John 1:9
 - c) When we confess national sin, we can pray that others will do the same thing.
 - i) When Jesus was being nailed to the cross, He did not say, "I forgive you," but He prayed for their forgiveness.
 - (1) Luke 23:34
- 5) WE ARE TO PRAY WITH SPIRITUAL CONCERN (DANIEL 9:17-19)
- a) Many of our prayers are selfish prayers.
 - i) We often pray about inconveniences.
 - (1) We pray about long lines at the airport, etc.
 - b) Daniel 9:17-19
 - i) Daniel was not merely trying to get out of difficulty.
 - ii) Daniel was not trying to get everything healed so that the people could go back to their own careless and selfish lives.
 - c) Why do we want a revival?

- i) Do we want it for our own sake?
- ii) Do we want it for our family's sake?
- iii) Do we want it for our church's sake?
- iv) Do we want it for our nation's sake?
- v) Or, do we want it for God's sake?
 - (1) Matthew 6:9-13
 - (a) It isn't that God is not concerned about our personal needs; we can surely pray for our daily bread and pray about our trespasses.
 - (b) But, first of all, we should pray for the glory of God.
 - (c) When we begin to pray for the glory of God, then God moves in.
 - (i) God will not share His glory with another.

6) CONCLUSION

- a) It is prayer time in America.
 - i) It is time for people who know God to seek the face of God in prayer.
 - ii) These are desperate days in which we live.
- b) We need to set ourselves to pray.
 - i) This does not mean that we go around with a long face and that we take the joy out of life.
 - (1) Joy is part of our strength.
 - (a) Nehemiah 8:10
 - (2) Matthew 6:17
- c) James 5:16
 - i) Are you a righteous person?
 - ii) To pray without a heart given to God is a religious farce.
- d) The first thing you need to do is to get on praying ground, which is to be saved by God's power divine.
- e) Are you saved?
- f) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- g) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31
 - v) John 3:16