

SOUL ON FIRE

RETURNING TO GOD IN PRAYER

Daniel 9:1-23

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“When God intends great mercy for His people, the first thing He does is to set them to praying.” Matthew Henry (1662-1714)

What does it look like when we return to God in prayer?

In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of Median descent, who was made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans—in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, observed in the books the number of the years which was revealed as the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years. Daniel 9:1-2

So I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.

1. We get serious.

A. We give Him our undivided attention.

B. We approach Him with a broken and contrite heart.

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise. Psalm 51:17

2. We get reverent.

I prayed to the LORD my God and confessed and said, "Alas, O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and lovingkindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments ... Daniel 9:4

A. We remember who He is.

“For the LORD your God is the God of gods and the Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God who does not show partiality, nor take a bribe.” Deuteronomy 10:17

B. We remember He is faithful and true.

Then the LORD passed by in front of him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations." Exodus 34:6-7

*"To the Lord our God belong compassion and forgiveness,
for we have rebelled against Him." Daniel 9:9*

3. We get right.

... we have sinned, committed iniquity, acted wickedly and rebelled, even turning aside from Your commandments and ordinances. Moreover, we have not listened to Your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings, our princes, our fathers and all the people of the land. Righteousness belongs to You, O Lord, but to us open shame, as it is this day." Daniel 9:5-7

A. We honestly and fully confess our sins and repent.

1. We have refused to listen.

Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And he did evil in the sight of the LORD his God; he did not humble himself before Jeremiah the prophet who spoke for the LORD. And he also rebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar who had made him swear allegiance by God. But he stiffened his neck and hardened his heart against turning to the LORD God of Israel. Furthermore, all the officials of the priests and the people were very unfaithful following all the abominations of the nations; and they defiled the house of the LORD which He had sanctified in Jerusalem. And the LORD, the God of their fathers, sent word to them again and again by His messengers, because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place; but they continually mocked the messengers of God, despised His words and scoffed at His prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against His people, until there was no remedy. 2 Chronicles 36:11-16

2. We have refused to respond.

"As it is written in the law of Moses, all this calamity has come on us; yet we have not sought the favor of the LORD our God by turning from our iniquity and giving attention to Your truth. Daniel 9:13

3. We are covered in shame.

"O my God, I am ashamed and embarrassed to lift up my face to You, my God, for our iniquities have risen above our heads and our guilt has grown even to the heavens. Since the days of our fathers to this day we have been in great guilt, and on account of our iniquities we, our kings and our priests have been given into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity and to plunder and to open shame, as it is this day." Ezra 9:6-7

4. We are deserving of the calamity upon us.

"Therefore the LORD has kept the calamity in store and brought it on us; for the LORD our God is righteous with respect to all His deeds which He has done, but we have not obeyed His voice." Daniel 9:14

B. We humbly and boldly ask for forgiveness and restoration.

“O Lord, in accordance with all Your righteous acts, let now Your anger and Your wrath turn away from Your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain ... So now, our God, listen to the prayer of Your servant and to his supplications, and for Your sake, O Lord, let Your face shine on Your desolate sanctuary. 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 are not presenting our supplications before You on account of any merits of our own, but on account of Your great compassion. O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and take action! For Your own sake, O my God, do not delay, because Your city and Your people are called by Your name.” Daniel 9:16-19

"O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you insight with understanding. At the beginning of your supplications the command was issued, and I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed [greatly loved]; so give heed to the message and gain understanding of the vision. Daniel 9:22-23

What will it take for us to really seek His face in repentance?