

#11 - 8/12/2018 - Averted - 2 Samuel 21 - God provides direction through prayer when His people face trying times.

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#11 - 8/12/2018 - Resolved - God provides direction and strength through prayer when His people face trying times.

I. David's discovered through prayer that Israel was punished for King Saul

action s- 2 Samuel 21:1 *Now there was a famine in the days of David for three years, year after year; and David sought the presence of the LORD. And the LORD said, "It is for Saul and his bloody house, because he put the Gibeonites to death."*

The way you live your life will either hinder or benefit your prayer life? Peter tells us this when he exhorts men: *"You husbands in the same way, live with your wives in an understanding way,...show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered."*^A. We see David's prayers being hindered because of the sin Saul committed in his role as the King of Israel against the Gibeonites.^B About 25 years later a great famine had come over the land of Israel, and David was seeking God's face.^C

Because there was guilt on Saul and his house for breaking Israel's oath with Gibeon and slaughtering them, God would not answer David's prayers. We see here not only God's dislike for Saul's sin, but also His grace in giving David the opportunity to satisfy Saul's sin, which is exactly what David does.

Do you have a guilty conscience? Has the Spirit placed a conviction of sin on your heart for something you said or an action you took? When you go to the Lord in prayer, confess your sin, ask for forgiveness, and then go and be reconciled with anyone who you have wronged; Then, by the grace of God, what was said of Israel may also be said of you: *"And after that God was moved by prayer for their land"*^D.

What shows you the effectiveness of your prayer life? [10 helps for effective prayers!](#)

Notes; **A-** 1 Peter 3:7; **B-** The story starts with Joshua not asking God for guidance when the Gibeonites came claiming to be from a far off land and asking for a peace treaty with mighty Israel in 1405 BC. For the story about the peace treaty found in Joshua 9 click [here](#). So the Gibeonites had a long-term commitment of protection from Israel which Saul violated. Saul's violation is not reported anywhere else so we do not know when it occurred. Saul reigned 1043-1010 BC, so it was from 363-395 after the commitment to the Gibeonites. **C-** We don't know when the famine occurred but it was after David provided for Mephibosheth in 995 BC, see [2 Samuel 21:7](#). Therefore it was at least 15-40 years after Saul's violation. **D-** [2 Samuel 21:14](#)d; E-

II. David covers the guilt of Israel by a sacrifice requested by the Gibeonites. [2](#)

[Samuel 21:1-14](#)...² *So the king called the Gibeonites and spoke to them (now the Gibeonites were not of the sons of Israel but of the remnant of the Amorites, and the sons of Israel made a covenant with them, but Saul had sought to kill them in his zeal for the sons of Israel and Judah).*

So why was it such a big deal that Saul put some of the Gibeonites to death? In [Joshua 9](#), we find the answer to that question. The Gibeonites tricked the Israelites into swearing an oath guaranteeing their safety in the land. *Joshua made peace with them and made a covenant with them, to let them live; and the leaders of the congregation swore an oath to them.* [Joshua 9:15] When the trick was discovered Joshua made them servants of Israel and the Lord continually [[Joshua 9:27](#)]. Israel very soon had to defend Gibeon [[Joshua 10:1-28](#)].

There is a message to us today because before giving the oath; "¹⁴ *the men of Israel took some of their provisions, and did not ask for the counsel of the LORD.*" As Disciples we need to continually walk in the counsel of God.

God promised Abraham offspring, a nation, and land, and He delivered on those promises faithfully. Faithfulness is a big deal for God. When God swears an oath and He keeps it.

Therefore when Saul showed unfaithfulness to the Gibeonites God placed the burden of guilt on Israel. Even though sworn to by the Israelites and not God this was a sin that had to be dealt with. And He used His servant David to take away the guilt of Israel.

We know that the actions of King David point to the actions of a King infinitely greater than David. our Lord Jesus Christ. Through His death, burial, and resurrection, He has taken away the guilt of all those who trust in Him. While David had to give the seven sons of Saul ^A to the Gibeonites for them to sacrifice for the sins of Israel, Jesus Himself hung on a cross and arose for the sins of the world. May we trust in Him and rejoice in Him every day.

Why was it so important for the Israelites to make right the oath they made to the Gibeonites?

Praise God together for His unchanging and unwavering faithfulness. Thank Him for the ultimate display of faithfulness He has given to us: the cross of Jesus.

Notes: A- You may question this transfer of the 7 men to the Gibeonites. Warren Wiersbe said "we must keep in mind that we're dealing with law, not grace, and Israel, not the church. The law of Moses required that an unsolved murder be atoned for by sacrifice [[Deuteronomy 21:1-9](#)...⁶ *All the elders of that city which is nearest to the slain man shall wash their hands over the heifer whose neck was broken in the valley;* ⁷ *and they shall answer and say, 'Our hands did not shed this blood, nor did our eyes see it.* ⁸ *Forgive Your people Israel whom You have redeemed, O LORD, and do not place the guilt of innocent blood in the midst of Your people Israel.'* *And the blood guiltiness shall be forgiven them.*]". So how much more, a known attempt to destroy an entire group of

III. [Daniel 9:1-19](#)...Prayer using the ACTS acronym: Preparing for prayer by studying the Bible and giving attention to God - [Daniel 9:1-3](#)... ² 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. ³ So I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth and ashes.

Daniel was studying his bible in [Jeremiah 25:11-12, 29:10; Isaiah 44:28](#) and found that the captivity of Israel would end in 70 years by the hand of a man named Cyrus.

Daniel realized that the time was ready for the Israelites to return to Israel. Daniel was a man of prayer. He prayed 3 times a day even if it meant he would be thrown into the lion's den [6:1-28](#).

v.3a I gave my attention to the Lord God: Daniel was determined in prayer. He approached God as a man who would not be denied from reaching his goal. He could do this because he was convinced that **his prayer was in the will of God**, and knew it was not motivated by any selfish desire.

v.3b To seek Him by prayer and supplications: Daniel was not passive as God's prophetic plan unfolded before him. In his approach to God he made a request, asking God to perform His promise in the way that **would bring God the most glory**.

v.3c With fasting, sackcloth, and ashes: This reflected Daniel's humble heart in approaching God. Fasting, sackcloth, and ashes are signs of humility and mourning over sin.

"While God honors the briefest of prayers, effective prayer requires faith in the Word of God, proper attitude of mind and heart, privacy, and unhurried confession and petition. Daniel's humility, reverence, and earnestness are the hallmarks of effective prayer." [\[Walvoord\]](#)

Are you ready to pray in humility to God through our High Priest Jesus because you know God's will revealed in the Bible and are giving your full attention to the Lord? Otherwise, do you pray for His will from the Bible, Holy Spirit and the mind of Jesus in the circumstance you are praying for?

IV. A- Adoration and praising the Lord - Prayer using the ACTS acronym - [Daniel 9:4](#) *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,*

v.4b *Alas, O Lord, the great and awesome God,*

Daniel starts with adoration and praise to the great and awesome God, the Creator and Sustainer of the universe. He is Omnipresent- everywhere all the time; Omniscient- He has complete knowledge of everything: past, present and future; Omnipotent- all-powerful; Omniscient- all wise and know what is best for me, and Omniattendant- constantly attentive to His children.

v.4c. *who keeps His covenant and lovingkindness*

God is holy and faithful to keep His covenants and is all-caring; full of love, goodness, mercy and grace, while being wrathful toward sin. He has exchanged Disciples sin for His righteousness through Jesus. This gave the Disciple eternal victory over the **penalty** of sin at salvation and we now have the **power** available to us of self-control to avoid daily sin.

v.4d. *for those who love Him and keep His commandments,*

God said through Paul; ¹⁴ *For the love of Christ controls us, ...* ¹⁵ *and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.* [2 Corinthians 5:14-15] and through John; *"If you love Me you will keep My commandments."* [John 14:15] and *"For this is what love for God is: to keep His commands. And His commands are not a burden,"* [1 John 5:3 CSB] and through Mark, Jesus said: *ōYou shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength. You shall love your neighbor as yourself."* [Mark 12:30-31]

Does your prayer begin with strong statements about the greatness of Almighty God? [\[Revelation 4:8b,11\]](#)

V. C- Confessing sin - Prayer using the ACTS approach - [Daniel 9:5-15](#)... ⁵ *we have sinned, committed iniquity, acted wickedly and rebelled, even turning aside from Your commandments and ordinances....* ¹⁴ *Therefore the LORD has kept the calamity in store and brought it on us;...* ¹⁵ *"And now, O Lord our God, who have brought Your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand and have made a name for Yourself, as it is this day—we have sinned, we have been wicked.*

Daniel was reading his Bible and meditating on Israel's history. In 1446 BC God delivered the Israelites with a mighty hand from slavery in Egypt, but because of their lack of trust they had to wonder in the wilderness for 40 years. Joshua led them into Israel and they were mostly obedient in taking the land as commanded by God. But, when Joshua died they began a downward spiral of falling away from God that finally resulted in them demanding a king.

In 1043 BC Saul was the first king, but God rejected him and anointed David and then Solomon as king. This was the pinnacle of Israel's power until our current day.

But Samuel rebelled against God before his death and in 931 BC the kingdom was spilt into the 10 northern tribes known as Israel and Judah and Benjamin, known as Judah.

Israel never had a God following king and in 722 BC they were destroyed by the Assyrians. Judah had 4 or 5 good kings and survived until 605 BC when Babylon began the first of 3 deportations to Babylon. Finally in 586 BC Jerusalem was destroyed.

During this entire time the nations had faithful prophets that warned them of a judgment day coming. Some times they would heed these warnings for a while but then continue the downward spiral. Daniel is contemplating this sin by Israel and its people and realized their *calamity* had resulted from their sin. Daniel said *we have sinned, we have been wicked*.

What can we learn from the example of Israel's downward spiral from 1446BC-70AD?

Do you have a daily habit of self-examination for sin, confession and repentance of individual sin, so your sin will not build up?

VI. T- Thanksgiving - Prayer using the ACTS acronym - Daniel 9:1-2... ¹ *In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of Median descent, who was made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans—* ² *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 was studying his Bible reading in [Jeremiah 25:11-12,29:10; Isaiah 44:28](#) and found that the captivity of Israel would end in 70 years by the hand of a man named Cyrus. [Daniel 2:36-39](#) tells of the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream that the Babylonian empire would be replaced by another empire. Then years later, Daniel interpreted the handwriting on the wall for Belshazzar, the final Babylonian king as; "the Babylonian kingdom will be replaced by the Medes and Persians and ³⁰ *That same night Belshazzar...was slain*", in 539 BC. [[Daniel 5:28-30](#)]

Daniel had been in captivity in Babylon and God had caused him to be elevated to the highest rank as an advisor to the King. Now almost 70 years had passed and he realized that the prophecy of God through Jeremiah and Isaiah was about to be fulfilled. The Medes and Persians were in power in Babylon and Daniel knew the Cyrus, Isaiah said would release the captives. ^A

Can you imagine the **thankfulness** of Daniel as he read the scripture and thought of his experiences in Babylon. God's prophecy was being fulfilled and the Israelites would be given an opportunity to go home to Jerusalem. That is what he prayed for.

Have you reviewed the major events in your life and been thankful as you realized the hand of God in your life? Do you ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to

you what you have to be thankful for every day in good and bad times?

[Thankfulness for 31 days for salvation](#)

Notes: A- Daniel was praying in 539 BC the year the Medo-Persians conquered Babylon and knew both Cyrus and Darius. Cyrus gave permission apparently in 538 BC and the first Jews begin to prepare for the hazardous trip back to Jerusalem. The 70 years would have been up in 535 BC from Daniels capture and deportation to Babylon in 605 BC. All these dates are very approximate!

"Cyrus II (also known as Cyrus the great): 576. 530 BC; Darius I (also known as Darius the great): 550. 486BC. [note the overlap] Cyrus II and Darius I were both part of the Achaemenid family dynasty. Darius was the second cousin once removed of Cyrus II - Cyrus's great grandfather Teispes was Darius's great great grandfather. Darius was also Cyrus's son-in-law as he married his daughter Atossa." [source](#)

"Darius the Mede, Medo-Persian governor (king) of Babylonia under Cyrus the Great mentioned esp. in the sixth ch. of Daniel. Immediately following the death of Belshazzar the Chaldean king in Oct. 539 b.c., Darius the Mede is said to have received the kingdom (Daniel 5:31), probably having been made king over the realm of the Chaldeans (9:1) by Cyrus the Great (1:21; 6:28)." [source](#)

VII. S- Supplication Asking mercy for Israel - Prayer using the ACTS acronym -

Daniel 9:16-19... ¹⁶ O Lord,... let now Your anger and Your wrath turn away from Your city Jerusalem,... ¹⁷ So now, our God, listen to the prayer of Your servant and to his supplications, and for Your sake, O Lord... ¹⁸ O my God, incline Your ear and hear!...for we are not presenting our supplications before You on account of any merits of our own, but on account of Your great compassion. ¹⁹ 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."

In his supplication Daniel was direct in asking the Lord to turn His anger and wrath away from His people. Daniel had already confessed these sins but now he asks the Lord to allow his people to return to Jerusalem in accordance with His word through Jeremiah and Isaiah. Daniel was bold and insistent because he believed he was praying scripture that was the Lords will.

He prayed not because of any merit on his or Israel's part but because of the Lords great compassion.

Then he ended his prayer with another strong petition "***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.***"

Do I pray with the boldness and power of Daniel because I am praying in His will from the Bible. What steps will you take to improve your prayer life?

VIII. Praying ACTS acronym 2 Samuel 21:1-14 & Daniel 9:1-19 - Summary/app:

1. **2 Samuel 21:1** - David discovered through prayer that Israel was being punished for King Saul actions. What shows you the effectiveness of your prayer life? **10 helps for effective prayers!**

2. **Daniel 9:1-19**...Prayer using the ACTS acronym: Preparing for prayer by studying the Bible and giving attention to God - **Daniel 9:1-3**...Are you ready to pray in humility to God through our High Priest Jesus because you know God's will revealed in the Bible and are giving your full attention to the Lord? Otherwise, do you pray for His will from the Bible, Holy Spirit and the mind of Jesus in the circumstance you are praying for?

3. **A- Adoration and praising the Lord** - **Daniel 9:4**... Does your prayer begin with strong statements about the greatness of Almighty God? [**Revelation 4:8b,11**]

4. **C- Confessing sin** - **Daniel 9:5-15**... Do you have a daily habit of self-examination for sin, confession and repentance of individual sin, so your sin will not build up?

5. **T- Thanksgiving** - **Daniel 9:1-2**...Have you reviewed the major events in your life and been thankful as you realized the hand of God in your life? Do you ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you what you have to be thankful for every day and in the moment of good and bad times? [**Thankfulness for 31 days for salvation**]

6. **S- Supplication** - Powerful example in **Daniel 9:16-23**...¹⁶ O Lord,... *let now Your anger and Your wrath turn away from Your city Jerusalem,...* ¹⁷ So now, our God, *listen to the prayer of Your servant and to his supplications, and for Your sake, O Lord...* ¹⁸ O my God, *incline Your ear and hear!...for we are not presenting our supplications before You on account of any merits of our own, but on account of Your great compassion.* ¹⁹ 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.*”

Do I pray with the boldness and power of Daniel because I am praying in His will from the Bible?

7. What steps will you take to improve your prayer life?

8. **Memory Verse** - **Daniel 9:18-19a, 21**... ¹⁸ O my God, *incline Your ear and hear!...for we are not presenting our supplications before You on account of any merits of our own, but on account of Your great compassion.* ^{19a} O Lord, *hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and take action!* ²¹ *while I was still speaking in prayer, then the man Gabriel,...came to me in my extreme weariness....* [vv.21-23...Assurance Daniel's prayer would be answered and the future was foretold]

1 Corinthians 7:17 *Only, as the Lord has assigned to each one, as God has called each, in this manner let him walk.*

