



TRUTH APPLICATIONS

Sermon Notes

Daniel After the Lions

Daniel 9:1-19

David Anguish

Introduction

1. In Daniel 9, we read a prayer that holds back little in the way of praise to God, is almost uncomfortably direct in admitting Israel's sins, and is one of the boldest approaches to God.
2. Remember some things about the man who prayed.
 - a. One of Israel's noble class, Daniel was taken to serve in Babylon's court (Dan. 1:3-7).
 - b. He resisted Babylonian dietary ways, and was rewarded for it (1:8-16).
 - c. He became a leader among the king's advisers (2:46-49; 5:13-31).
 - d. He survived Babylon's fall and was elevated to prominence by the Persian ruler (6:3).
3. Then came his most famous trial as his enemies tried to destroy him.
 - a. Because Daniel was known for his unwavering faith, other advisers flattered Darius into decreeing that, for thirty days, prayer could be offered only to the king (6:7).
 - b. Daniel continued as before, visibly praying and thanking God three times a day (6:10).
 - c. His enemies reported him, the king sentenced him to the lions' den, and God protected him and allow him to keep prospering (6:28).
4. It is in light of those previous experiences that we must read Daniel 9. Let's learn from him.

Body

- I. Faith Resting on Knowledge.
 - A. Daniel prayed after reading God's promise (9:1-2; cf. Jer. 25:8-12; 29:10).
 - B. He boldly expected deliverance because of other things he knew (v. 19).
 1. God keeps his covenant with those who obey him (v. 4).
 2. His people were captives because God promised it for disobedience (vv. 5-6, 9-12).
 3. God had delivered his people from foreign oppression before (vv. 15-16).
 4. God did what he did based on his mercy, not the people's merits (v. 18).
 - C. In a world filled with temptations and distractions from the ways of God, we cannot stress too much the importance of increasing our knowledge for boosting our faith.
 1. "Faith according to the Bible does not involve a rash decision made without reflection or a blind submission in the face of an authoritarian claim. It is the act of

wholehearted trust in the goodness and promises of the God who confronts us with his reality and gives us ample reason to believe that he is there.”¹

II. A Trustworthy God.

- A. Daniel trusted in a God of honesty, integrity and uprightness, because of his character, not because he was bigger than Daniel was.
 - 1. He is “the great and awesome God, who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him” (v. 4).
 - 2. He is the God of righteousness (vv. 7, 14, 16).
 - 3. To God “belong mercy and forgiveness” (v. 9), the traits that prompted Daniel to approach him so boldly (v. 18).
 - 4. Again, notice that God had shown these traits, not just affirmed them (v. 15).
- B. This feature of Daniel’s faith helps us see both the certainty and uncertainty of faith.
 - 1. It is not that we can know everything about the outcome before we will step out in faith; in truth, we are sometimes left to wonder about God’s ways and presence.
 - 2. In those times, we need the knowledge of who is and what he has done to remind us that he has always been faithful and done what is best for his covenant people.

III. Responding with Obedience.

- A. Daniel stands in the biblical tradition of true faith by showing that the knowledge and trust that are integral to it always led to action.
- B. This feature of faith, perhaps more pronounced elsewhere in the book, is in Daniel 9.
 - 1. Verse 7 suggests that God had no choice but to allow the people to be taken captive; they had consistently disobeyed.
 - 2. Verses 10-14 repeat this theme, elaborating Israel’s faithless (disobedient) response to God’s mercy and forgiveness (v. 9).
- C. Daniel reminds us that God will not force his mercy where it is unwelcome; true faith always entails an obedient response.

Conclusion

- 1. The story has been told of a girl who told another that she had ten pennies. The other girl looked at her hand, saw that she had only five, and said, “You have only five pennies.” Her friend replied, “I have five now, and my father told me that he would give me five more tonight. So, I have ten.” Such was the character of her father that when she heard his promise, she knew the act was as good as done.²
- 2. That’s the spirit Daniel had, leading him to pray as he did. His was the kind of faith all sincere Christians want to have. It’s possible, but only if we commit to know God and his ways so well that we trust him implicitly, and do what he says even when appearances would seem to leave us with only despair. Let us grow in such faith, beginning with surrender to his ways.

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¹ Clark H. Pinnock, *Reason Enough: A Case for the Christian Faith* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1980), 13.

² Michael P. Green, ed., *Illustrations for Biblical Preaching*, Revised Edition (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1989), 172.