

Daniel Reveals a Heart for Prayer

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[0 : 0 0] Sting a very warm welcome to everybody this evening as we gather together to worship God. We pray that we will know his presence as we call upon him and worship him, but we pray that all of us in our own homes will have a spirit of prayer because on this particular Lord's Day we have been asked to make this a day especially for prayer.

We need national prayer. We need that the Lord will have mercy upon us because there is no one else that can truly help us. We have a lot of wise people in various areas of life that the wisdom that we need above all is from the Lord and we need his protection, his help and his deliverance, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 and not just with regard to the illness itself which is devastating and has devastated so many homes and families and lives, but the knock-on effect through job losses and loss of income and all the different things that it is bringing in its wake.

So we pray that the Lord will indeed have mercy upon us. We're going to begin by reading from Psalm 51, the 51st Psalm, and this is from the Scottish Psalter.

After thy lovingkindness, Lord, have mercy upon me. For thy compassions great blot out all mine iniquity, me cleanse from sin and throughly wash from mine iniquity.

For my transgressions I confess, my sin I ever see. Against thee the only have I sinned, in thy sight done this ill. For my transgressions I confess, my sin I have mercy upon you.

[2 : 1 5] And then I shall be whiter than the snow. Let us now bow in prayer. O Lord, our God, as we bow in your presence this evening, we pray that you will bless us.

We give thanks for the words that we sang there, the words of sorrow and penitence, the words that came from a broken heart, words that were penned by the psalmist when he came to discover the awfulness of his sin and of who he actually was in your sight.

And that is something that is largely hidden from us, that we don't realise the depth of depravity that actually exists within our heart.

And that the seed of every sin is there, every conceivable sin. And indeed it would frighten us if we could see what we would become, were it not, for your withholding and for your grace which you extend.

We give thanks, Lord, for what we often term your common grace, so there's nothing common about it. But where your grace is extended, where you, for the good of people and society and our well-being you exercise upon and do for us because it is in you that we live, move and have our being.

[3 : 4 6] And so we give thanks, Lord, for all that you give to us every single day. But we pray, O Lord, that we may have a sense of our dependence upon you.

And we ask, Lord, that you will be merciful to us individually, personally, and that you will forgive us our sin. We pray that for our families.

Lord, we come before you and we confess as families our sin before you. We confess, Lord, as communities our sin before you.

We confess, Lord, as individual congregations our sin before you. We confess, Lord, as a church throughout this whole nation of ours our sin before you.

And we confess, Lord, our national sin. We have turned away from you. As it says in Jeremiah, we have hewn out for ourselves broken cisterns that can hold no water.

[4 : 50] And we don't realise that. Lord, forgive us our idolatry because we have made idols not of wood and of stone and of clay, but we have made idols of so many areas and aspects of life where we worship so much that is in itself is not wrong.

But yet it is it is put in the place in our heart. And you know that we have turned from you and we are taken up with these things that are going to pass with the using.

And so forgive us, Lord, for the way that we have turned out back upon you. And forgive us, Lord, for the way that your word is being disregarded in this nation.

And it is looked upon as something that is way past itself by date. Forgive us, Lord, nationally for those that are so often trying to eradicate your word from society.

We pray that that will never, ever, ever happen. And we ask, Lord, rather than it being eradicated, that your word would become more and more prominent in our lives.

[5 : 57] We pray, Lord, that even through what is going happening just now, that more and more people will begin to look to you. Because we're aware of a growing unrest amongst people, a growing anxiety, a growing sense of fretfulness, sometimes of anger and frustration and all kinds of things beginning to bubble and boil away.

But, Lord, in the midst of all that, may people begin to look to you and realise that there is a God in heaven. And so we pray that you will forgive us all our sin and that you will cleanse us from all our iniquity.

And we have to confess, Lord, that so often we do not truly sorrow for our sin because we side with sin. We have a love for sin. Oh, forgive us, we pray.

We ask, Lord, that you will heal our land. You have given great promises to your people when they truly repent of their sin that you will hear from heaven and that you will heal their land.

Lord our God, we pray then that you will bless us. Bless us in our homes and in our families and all whom we love. Bless your word as we will come to it shortly and read it and preach from it and we pray that that will be a blessing to our souls that it will challenge us because this is what your word does.

[7 : 18] We don't just go through your word as it were as a duty because yes, it is a duty as well but it is always in order that we may hear what you're speaking to us and telling us and saying to us and so often your word is directing us and showing us a way to go.

Grant us an appetite for your word so that it will become the mainstay of our lives and that our lives will be directed by your truth and that we might live by it and die by it.

Oh Lord our God, we pray that your name will be the name that we seek to honour and to glorify in life. That your name and your cause is what we will seek to promote and we give thanks, oh Lord, for all your praying people in this land and although they are not given any attention yet we know that there are many who have not bowed the knee to Baal and who are still upholding your name and seeking to glorify your name here wherever they are in their own communities, in their own homes, in their own environment.

Pray that you will bless us, bless our leaders, those in authority over us and protect us Lord because we cannot protect ourselves from a virus that nobody can see to the human eye and can cause so much havoc and damage in every aspect of the chaos and carnage that it has shown it can bring and we are frightened will come again in devastating ways and so we pray that you will be with us and we pray for our NHS staff, we give thanks for them, give thanks Lord for all that they are and all that they have been and all that they have done and we pray that you will continue to support them and to keep them and make every provision for them, we pray Lord for our carers, those in care homes and those in the community, Lord we give thanks for them, for the wonderful work that they do as well and we pray that you will bless them with every blessing, both spiritual and temporal, we pray that you will make your word become more precious in our society and we pray for our whole world that we are part of, we ask Lord that in the areas of this world where there is real persecution, where your people are downtrodden and where they have no voice and where a government will seek to try and destroy the cause of

Christ, we pray for your people, protect them there, Lord watch over us and do us good, bless our young people as they're going back to school, we commit them to your care and keeping and we ask Lord that you will bless all of our need, we pray for those who are sick and those who are ill, those who are in their own homes, those who are in hospital, we commit them to your care and keeping, pray for those who have undergone surgery or are undergoing it, we pray for healing and restoration, Lord we pray for those who are maybe nearing the end of life, prepare the dying for death, may they not die alone but die in the Lord Jesus Christ, O Lord our God we pray for those who have broken hearts, those who miss loved ones, bind up their broken hearts we pray, Lord cleanse us from our every sin, in Jesus name we ask it, Amen.

[10:54] Just a wee word to the young people, as we're saying today has been a day that the church has called upon us to pray because we need prayer as a nation and our leaders need prayer.

And the church must pray because the Bible tells us very clearly that God's people have a big duty and a big responsibility because they have to pray for the people and for the nation.

And I remember coming across a story years ago and I was trying to find it and I couldn't just now but if my memory serves me right it goes something like this.

It was a long long time ago, many many years ago and this was somewhere down in the south of England and there had been a tremendous spell of beautiful beautiful weather.

Now of course we all love a spell of beautiful weather and if you remember at the beginning of lockdown this year earlier on we had a lovely spell of weather. It just went on week after week and we're saying wow this is wonderful.

[12:12] But down there there there's spell of weather and it was really really hot. Every day, every week, every month, blue skies, blazing hot sun, not a cloud in the sky and you'd say to you what's wrong with that?

Well the only problem is that when that goes on and on and on with no rain then there are real problems because the grass won't grow and if there's no grass then the cows can't eat and the sheep can't eat and the pigs can't there's no food and again then the crops won't grow because then there'd be no grain or there'd be no wheat or barley or oats and there'd be no bread, nothing to bake with vegetables and there'd be no vegetables, there'd be no potatoes or carrots or turnips or any of these things, there'd be no fruit, there'd be no apples or strawberries or raspberries or any of these things and it was way back in the day, there weren't supermarkets that you could go and fill up your shelves and things could come from all over different parts of Europe.

It was, it was kind of you, in that, in these areas you kind of grew for what you needed yourselves and there would be a couple of wee shops. So it was becoming a real, real worry that if rain didn't come there would be no growth and then people would eventually begin to face starvation.

So it was decided in this particular, it was a large village and with a lot of little farmlands outside and what they probably don't call them crops but a lot of little holdings, and it was decided that they would have a day set aside for prayer, that they would ask God for rain.

And so they had agreed upon the day. And so the minister who lived about a mile away from the church, and we've got to remember that way back then there was no televisions, there was no internet, he couldn't look up and find out what the forecast was going to be, what we can do nowadays because there's so many different ways said we can just figure out what it's going to do today and tomorrow and maybe the next day or sometimes they give long range forecasts, well there was none of that.

[14 : 41] So the minister, as he said, stayed about a mile from the house and on the day when they were going to have the prayer meeting and everybody was going to come to the church and the minister lived with his wife and they had a young boy and I'm not sure what the young boy's name was, we'll call him John and he was about nine or ten years of age and of course the minister's wife shouted, John are you ready, we're ready to go, he shouted coming so he came out of his room and as they were heading out of the manse, John picked up because there was a hall stand just inside the front door and he picked up his father's big umbrella and his father said, what are you taking that for?

He said, it's not going to rain today, look, there's not a cloud in the sky, it's like every other day, it's a brilliant blue sky. John said, I thought it was praying for rain. Yes, said his father, it was praying for rain but it's not going to rain today.

And often God doesn't answer right away, we're praying for rain but there's no point in that umbrella, you look really stupid taking that umbrella to church. Well he said, John said, sorry saying this but it seems stupid to me to be praying for rain and not be prepared for the rain.

John's mother said to her husband, just let him take the umbrella. So anyway, they went to church, walked the mile and when they arrived the church was full and there was quite a lot of smiles when John walked in with the umbrella.

So the prayer meeting began and went on for quite a long time. There was a lot of readings and a lot of prayers. And in those days there were no electric lights so it was just the natural light of the day.

[16 : 40] morning. But as the time went on they began to notice it was getting darker and darker and darker and then when they finished the prayer meeting and they went out, they looked out and the sky was really dark because there were loads of big black clouds had gathered over.

And they had hardly started walking when it started to pour. John put up the umbrella and said, good job I took the umbrella. And his mother said, it sure is.

And she said, I'll take the umbrella, you come in beside me. And John's father said, is there any room in there? And he said, no, sorry, the umbrella will only fit two under it.

You will have to walk. And indeed you deserve to walk in the rain because if it weren't for John there would be no umbrella here. And we'd all be soaked.

So you get soaked. And although the minister was glad in a sense, he was glad that the rain had come. He was like a drowned rat by the time he got home.

[17 : 48] And so was everybody who went. Of course they were all pleased that God had answered the rain. But you know something? Only John had the real faith and the real expecting that God was going to answer that prayer.

I'm sure many of the others expected that God would answer sometime. But John believed we're going to pray for rain. I believe God is going to answer that prayer.

That's faith. And far too often we're more like the minister who says oh well yes we're going to pray but maybe God will and maybe God won't and it might be a good while.

Wouldn't it be much better to be like John and say right? Lord I know the time is up to you but Lord I'm really praying about this and we should be looking and expecting and watching and waiting to see God answer our prayer.

May we have that spirit that this young lad showed. Let's say the Lord's prayer. Our Father which art in heaven hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

[19 : 03] Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom the power and the glory forever.

Amen. I want us to read together God's word as we find it in the book of Daniel. The book of Daniel and in chapter 9. Daniel chapter 9.

We read from the beginning. In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus by descent Amid who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans.

In the first year of his reign I Daniel perceived in the books the number of years that according to the word of the Lord to Jeremiah the prophet must pass before the end of the desolations of Jerusalem namely 70 years.

Then I turned my face to the Lord God seeking him by prayer and pleas for mercy with fasting and sacklet and ashes. I prayed to the Lord my God and made confession saying O Lord the great and awesome God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments.

[20 : 21] We have sinned and done wrong and acted wickedly and rebelled turning aside from your commandments and rules. We have not listened to your servants the prophets who spoke in your name to our kings our princes our fathers and to all the people of the land.

To you O Lord belongs righteousness but to us open shame as at this day to the men of Judah to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to all Israel those who are near and those who are far away in all the lands to which you have driven them because of the treachery that they have committed against you.

To us O Lord belongs open shame to our kings to our princes and to our fathers because we have sinned against you. To the Lord our God belong in mercy and forgiveness for we have rebelled against him and have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God by walking in his laws which he set before us by his servants and prophets.

All Israel has transgressed your law and turned aside refusing to obey your voice. The curse and oath that are written in the law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out upon us because we have sinned against him.

He has confirmed his words which he spoke against us and against our rulers who ruled us by bringing upon us a great calamity for under the whole heaven there has not been done anything like what has been done against Jerusalem.

[21 : 58] As it is written in the law of Moses all this calamity has come upon us yet we have not entreated the favour of the Lord our God turning from our iniquities and gaining insight by your truth.

Therefore the Lord has kept ready the calamity and brought it upon us for the Lord our God is righteous in all the works that he has done and we have not obeyed his voice.

And now O Lord our God who brought your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand and have made a name for yourself as at this day we have sinned we have done wickedly.

O Lord according to all your righteous acts let your anger and your wrath turn away from your city Jerusalem your holy hill because for our sins and for the iniquities of our fathers Jerusalem and your people have become a byword among all who are around us.

Now therefore O God listen to the prayer of your servant and to his pleas for mercy and for your own sake O Lord make your face to shine upon your sanctuary which is desolate.

[23 : 11] O my God incline your ear and hear. Open your eyes and see your desolations and the city that is called by your name for we do not present our plea before you because of our righteousness but because of your great mercy.

O Lord hear. O Lord forgive. O Lord pay attention and act. Delay not for your own sake O my God because your city and your people are called by your name.

While I was speaking and praying confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel and presenting my plea before the Lord my God for the holy hill of my God while I was speaking in prayer the man Gabriel whom I had seen in the vision of the first came to me in swift flight at the time of the evening sacrifice.

He made me understand speaking with me and saying O Daniel I have now come out to give you insight and understanding at the beginning of your pleas for mercy a word went out and I have come to tell it to you for you are greatly loved therefore consider the word and understand the vision and so on and may God bless to us this reading of his own holy word and I want us to think of these words that we read in verse 3 then I turned my face to the Lord God seeking him by prayer and pleas for mercy with fasting and sack of the ashes I prayed to the Lord my God and made confession saying O Lord the great and awesome God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments we have sinned and done wrong and acted wickedly and rebelled turning aside from your commandments and rules and so on verses 3 to 5 but I wanted to consider really the whole prayer but focusing mainly on these verses of verses 3 to 5 of

Daniel chapter 9 as we know the Bible is full of the history of the great men and women of God and one of the things that's so appealing about the history and the stories that we read in the Bible about all these different characters is that they're so human they are there displayed the men and women of God because of their faith and the experiences that they went through which are there for our understanding for our good for an example to us so that we learn from them we're told that in the word of God that they're there for our good for our understanding for our example both as warning and encouragement but one of the fascinating things is that the Bible shows the characters warts and all so that we see a lot of the yes the good qualities and the virtues and so on but also some of the failings and the faults are quite clearly demonstrated and shown and so one of the beautiful things about the Bible is its wonderful honesty and dealing with reality just as life really is but there are always one or two of the

[26 : 46] Bible characters and when you look at their lives you really can't find anything to blame any fault whatever in them of course they weren't faultless and they weren't free of sin they were sinners like everybody else but Daniel comes into that category because when you look at his life it was a life of unblemished an unblemished character with an unbelievably consistent witness and testimony whether he was on the very heights because he had reached the very pinnacle he was really in fact Darius had wanted to make him he had remember how Darius had set up three rulers within the place and he was of a mind to put Daniel as over the whole kingdom that was when the Medes and Persians had taken over and again with Nebuchad Nenser who was the great powerhouse in the whole world he had become a great favourite of

Nebuchad Nenser so Daniel was used to mingling with royalty but he also knew about betrayal and banishment and he knew all these things but he never changed he was the same man all the way through and that's part of what makes him such an endearing character and Daniel was one who as we know was termed by God greatly loved we see that in verse 23 and also in chapter 10 verse 19 he was greatly loved of God isn't that beautiful Abraham was a friend of God and David a man after God's own heart and so but here's Daniel greatly loved and Daniel was somebody who was given the most extraordinary visions regarding the future God opened up to Daniel the most amazing thing sometimes that Daniel flat on the ground trembling with what he saw and you know when you go for a New

Testament equivalent then you go to the book of Revelation and the book of Revelation of course was a revelation that was given to the Apostle John and remember the definition of John given in the New Testament the disciple whom Jesus loved so you have Daniel in the Old Testament who was really loved of God and you have John in the New Testament who was the disciple that Jesus loved and both these men were given they were granted great vision great visions they were brought to see things and so it would almost indicate that the closer that a person and it's not just it would indicate it's true the closer that a person lives with the Lord and the more that God will reveal of himself to us we're told in Psalm 25 the secret of the Lord is for them that fear him and so God will reveal more and more of himself the closer we live to him now we use the description been there done that worn a t-shirt well Daniel could say that he'd been there done that and worn a t-shirt and some because as we said Daniel was someone who had been through it all and yet he never changed and that's the amazing thing because as you and I know when our circumstances change whether for good or bad it can change us quite a bit as well but it never seemed to change

Daniel's witness of God and he of course saw the most incredible changes take place he saw the big swing of power Nebuchadnezzar who was the mighty ruler of Babylon and you would think that Babylon was going to go on forever and ever but of course it didn't and its dynasty its power was broken and taken over by the Greeks and Persians so Daniel saw that take place and we find at the beginning of this chapter that Daniel is reading the Bible not the Bible in the sense that we have today just the closed book here but the Bible in the sense of the word of God the scrolls that he would have of the different books and Daniel was reading these scrolls and I think it's very important to highlight here that here's a man who was given the most incredible visions and dreams and yet he never stopped needing to know what God was saying in his word because some people might be of the opinion and say

I've outgrown the Bible I'm going on feelings I'm just looking for how the Lord will lead me and guide me because he's going to lead me by his spirit and I will go on the feelings I don't need his word anymore but of course the Lord does prompt us and his spirit ministers to our spirit but you and I will never ever ever outgrow the need for God's word it is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy and that's why Daniel glorified and enjoyed God in this word because he studied the word despite all that he was given to see he never ever stopped reading the word and may I say to anybody who might be watching you in tonight and if so that you're watching it's good that you are but you know there's some people who grew up in the church and the Bible was part of their life growing up but you know they reached a stage in life when they thought I don't need this anymore I don't need God's word anymore oh yes you do biggest mistake that we can ever ever make is to discard God's word to relegate it out of our lives because we will never be the same people ever when we push

[32 : 53] God's side God's word aside and we're very conscious of that that even within our own land one of the worst things that can ever happen is when people try and push God's word aside but another interesting thing about Daniel here is that he is one of the busiest men in the kingdom because Daniel was right at the very top and he had so much administrative work to do he had so much under his control and charge and yet he never made his busyness an excuse for not having time to read God's word and neither should we our lives can sometimes be very very busy but we must never make that as an excuse we must always find time within our day to spend time in God's word and to read it prayerfully and the word of

God really has to be part of our daily diet now as Daniel is reading here and as we see it's in Jeremiah he's reading he's reading about the Jews captivity which he was part of the Jewish captivity and that it was a captivity that was inevitable now Jeremiah had prophesied that the Jews because of their turning back on the Lord they were going to be taken from Jerusalem Jerusalem was going to be destroyed the temple was going to be destroyed the land was going to be destroyed they were going to be taken into captivity but the wonderful thing is that after 70 years the Lord was going to restore their fortunes and to bring them back again to the land that's what we read in Jeremiah 29 verse 10 when 70 years are completed for Babylon I will visit you and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place and as God did then God continues still to do because

God's word will always always be fulfilled and you know as Daniel read God's word and it came through the reading of that word he was brought into the presence of God you know there are times when we are alone with God in the word and you're reading prayerfully in the word and then all of a sudden a different spirit comes upon you and you really feel a sense of awe and a sense of God's presence near you these times are wonderful it doesn't happen every day but you know you will remember times as you're reading God's word and prayerfully reading you're there on your own and then all of a sudden you begin to feel the Lord is here with me and there's a sense of awe and a sense of reverence and a sense of your heart melting as it were before him and and you you feel so unworthy and your sin is brought before you yet there's a holy delight in your heart that the Lord is close to you well the effect on

Daniel was we read it in verse 3 I turn my face to the Lord God seeking him by prayer and pleas for mercy with fasting and sackcloth and ashes this is showing how seriously Daniel took what God was saying in his word here we see that there's an outward Daniel is giving this outward display of what he is experiencing in his heart as well you know if God was to reveal to us what was really in our heart we would be undone every bit of ego would be flattened every stain of self righteousness would be done away with God was to show you and me right now what we were really like we would be shouting out like Isaiah oh woe is me for I am undone I am a man of unclean lips and so it's like as if Daniel at this moment he is seeing God is giving him an insight into the word and he is seeing he is seeing just the sin of the people of God so let us look just very briefly at

Daniel's prayer in order to learn from it and the first thing we see is very obvious it's a prayer of confession verse 5 we have sinned and done wrong and acted wickedly verse 6 we have not listened to your servants the prophets verse 10 we have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God but Daniel you'll notice in the prayer is saying that God had no option as it were but to bring this calamity upon the people and Daniel is quoting from he's saying it's very obvious in the law of Moses that this was going to come because in Leviticus and Deuteronomy God is telling his people there are blessings and cushions if you walk in my ways and you set me before you then he says the blessings will overtake you you can't help the blessings come upon you isn't that wonderful that God was going to shower the blessings upon them it was these blessings that's the actual language will overtake you they will just come on you but the reverse was true he said if you turn away from me if you push my word aside and you go after other gods be assured that the curses will also overtake you and part of the curses was that

[39 : 07] God would expel them from the land that he had brought them into and that all these blessings that their lives had been filled with would be removed from them it was solemn it was serious and it happened because the Jews thought it would never happen oh God won't do that to us but he did because he has to fulfil his word he would cease to be God if he did otherwise he is always true to himself and true to his word and so Daniel is seeing this and that's why Daniel is saying these things had to come upon us the blessings were upon us at times but the curses they came they fell down upon us but you also notice that Daniel includes himself in the sinning of the Jewish people he doesn't say they have sinned he says we have sinned you see here's here's this incredibly godly man a man who was greatly loved by God and yet he's identifying himself as one of the great sinners he says we have sinned we have done wickedly we have this we have that and that's what should be in the heart of God's people the Pharisee is the very opposite remember the

Pharisee in the temple I thank you Lord that I'm not like other men I'm not like that publican over there in the corner thank you Lord that I'm who I am not like other people that's a Pharisee Daniel Daniel had the spirit of the publican Lord be merciful to me a sinner and so Daniel is praying there and remember this is where this is where it all begins is amongst God's people and so we today we're praying and we're confessing our sin and we are saying to the Lord Lord we have sinned because we are full of idolatry if we were to search our own lives we would be staggered if God was to shine the spotlight of who we really are and what our real focuses are in life and what the idols in our heart really are we would get a big big shock

God seems God is challenging us every single one of us and that's what Daniel is doing we have sinned as we pray today and pray tonight make sure that we are praying collectively with all our people and yes we might say it in our heart by our mouth but even our hearts can sometimes think yeah yes we've all sinned but our nation has sinned so much worse but we're part of the nation and remember that judgment begins in the house of God and we need to remember that revival will begin with God's people as well and this is what we need to pray for looking on Wednesday in Habakkuk and we need to pray that prayer that the Lord would revive his work in the midst of the years in the midst of the years make known and that in wrath he would remember mercy that's what we pray that's what we're seeking that the Lord would do for us and so we must stand alongside everybody within this nation and alongside our leaders because God's people must plead if God's people don't plead who's going to plead who's going to plead in our nation today tonight if God's people don't not the godless not those who don't believe in

God or think about God or have no interest they're not going to be the ones we have to and the responsibility and the duty lies clearly upon us and we have to confess with genuine sorrow our sins and all our iniquities remember what the Lord said my people who are called by my name if my people who are called by my name humble themselves pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways then I will hear from heaven forgive their sin and heal their land heal their land here we are in the midst of a virus we need healing we need healing physically we need healing spiritually but see who the onus lies on God's people that's a challenge that's a real challenge and again we find that Daniel in verse 18 he's praying that the Lord would be merciful and he's saying

Lord you're totally right to be doing what you're doing but I'm asking Lord that you will restore our fortunes not according to our righteousness because we have none I can't come here Lord and say will you do this because of who I am no but because according to your mercy because he's a God who delights in mercy and you know this is what he loves to be pleaded for you know when when a person really pleads to the Lord for mercy the Lord will never turn his ear away from that cry that is a cry that he will always respond to when there is a genuine call and cry for mercy and so we find Daniel is pleading for that we do not present our pleas because of our righteousness but because of your own great mercy and again Daniel's prayer is specific because he he prays for Jerusalem and he prays for the mountain and he prays about the temple and he prays for specifics so should we sometimes our prayers are too general you know we have to be bold before God we need to bear our souls before God sometimes we we mince around when we're on our own before God let's be honest really honest open out our hearts you know when you go to the book of Psalms that's part of what I love in the book of

[45 : 36] Psalms is the honesty sometimes the brutal honesty of the Psalms where they get right in sometimes you think I would never dare speak to God like that but there was an honest integrity in their heart as they spoke to God and God responded to it and so we must be honest before God and specific but you'll also notice that Daniel when he prays for God's people he prays for the sake of God's great name and you know all the great saints in the Bible you notice have been caught up with the importance of God's great name it's God's great name that Daniel is concerned about in the restoration of his people it was God's great name that Moses was always concerned about going through that wilderness your name Lord it was God's great name that Joshua was concerned about when they were defeated at Ai what will the people round about say about your name

Lord this was the great concern you'll find it was the concern of Abraham and of David and of Elijah and Elisha and Isaiah and all the great saints are so concerned about the name of God are you like that tonight am I like that tonight does it hurt our heart when we see the name of God trampled into the dirt in our land does it hurt us or have we become so used to it that we just accept it or well if we have a right view of God we will always want that it is for his glory sake for his great name so that his name will be honored and as we pray for revival that it will be his name that will be seen that his name will receive the glory as we pray for healing and deliverance that it is that his name will be seen that people will look to him and acknowledge him and even in the saving of your soul if you're listening tonight and you have not yet come to faith ask that you will be saved for his great name sake because this is at the end of the day what it's all about may the lord bless these thoughts to us let us conclude our service singing from psalm 32 and sing psalms psalm number 32 and sing psalms how blessed the one how blessed the one who has received forgiveness for a sin whose sins are covered from god's face whose debt is cancelled in god's grace there's no deceit in sin when i kept silent all my bones with groaning were worn out beneath your hand i felt entrapped both day and night my strength was sapped as in a summer's drought then i laid bare my sin to you the guilt that lay within i said oh lord i have transgressed and you forgave when i confessed you pardoned all my sin sing these verses of psalm 32 1 to 5 how blessed the one who has received forgiveness for his holy sin whose sins are covered from god's face whose death is cancelled in god's grace there's there's no deceit in him when i kept silent all my bones with times when i

As in a summer crown Then I laid bare my sin to you The guilt that lay within I said, O Lord, I have transgressed And you forgive when I confess You pardon all my sin Now may the grace, mercy and peace of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit rest and abide upon each one of you now and forevermore. Amen.

Thank you again for joining with us tonight. Thank you. Thank you.