

Come to Understanding

**They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding,
and they that murmured shall learn doctrine. — Isaiah 29:24**

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A Presidential Prayer for Freedom

Most of us think of Daniel as one of the greatest prophets of the Bible, and he was. Daniel also had a secular occupation. He was the First President of the most powerful empire on earth. This was the Empire of the Medes and the Persians, which included the newly conquered Babylonian Empire:

- 1 It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom a hundred and twenty princes, which should be over the whole kingdom;
- 2 And over these three presidents; of whom Daniel was first: that the princes might give accounts to them, and the king should have no damage.
- 3 Then this Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm. -Daniel 6

Daniel had been brought to Babylon from Judah as a captive by King Nebuchadnezzar, who had destroyed the temple and Jerusalem. Daniel had outlasted the Babylonian Empire and even the Babylonian kings, and had risen to high positions in the governments.

Now, however, in a great conspiracy designed to destroy Daniel, other governmental officials schemed to enact a law requiring everyone to worship the king as a god. The penalty for violating the law was death by the mouths of lions. King Darius agreed to the law:

- 7 All the presidents of the kingdom, the governors, and the princes, the counselors, and the captains, have consulted together to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm decree, that whoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, except of you, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions.
- 8 Now, O king, establish the decree, and sign the writing, that it be not changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which alters not.
- 9 Therefore king Darius signed the writing and the decree. -Daniel 6

Even with his knowledge that it was now illegal to pray, Daniel continued in prayer to God. He got down upon his knees, just as he had always done, and prayed three times a day:

10 Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he knelt upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did before. -Daniel 6

Daniel was caught praying and was thrown into a den of lions. Nevertheless, Yahweh miraculously protected and delivered him, causing the king to issue a decree:

- 26 I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for he *is* the living God, and steadfast forever, and his kingdom *that* which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion *shall be even* to the end.
- 27 He delivers and rescues, and he works signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, who has delivered Daniel from the power of the lions.
- 28 So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian. -Daniel 6

Not only did President Daniel continue to pray, but he also studied the Word of Yahweh:

- 2 In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem. -Daniel 9

Studying Jeremiah's prophecies, which said the desolations of Jerusalem, which included the captivity of the people of Judah, would end after seventy years, Daniel realized that it was about time for that prophecy to be fulfilled. Daniel responded by humbling himself before Yahweh in prayer:

- 3 And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes: -Daniel 9

This is the prayer of a President, humbling himself upon his knees as he prayed for freedom for his people. He prayed to no other god but the one true God, which is Yahweh. He remembered Yahweh's promises of mercy that He made to those who love Him and keep His commandments:

- 4 And I prayed unto Yahweh my God, and made my confession, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments; -Daniel 9

**So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense,
and caused them to understand the reading. — Nehemiah 8:8**

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Daniel's prayer was one of repentance. He did not say "they" have sinned, but he said "we" have sinned:

- 5 We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from your precepts and from your judgments: -Daniel 9

It is tempting for us to righteously look upon the sins of others, when we are also sinners. John tells us:

- 8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. -1 John 1

Daniel included himself among the sinners as he cried to Yahweh, saying "we" have not listened to the prophets that spoke to us in your name. We only have "confusion of faces," meaning shame before us, because we have trespassed in sin against you:

- 6 Neither have we listened to your servants the prophets, which spoke in your name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land.
7 O Lord, righteousness *belongs* to you, but to us confusion of faces, as at this day; to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to all Israel, *that are near*, and *that are far off*, through all the countries where you have driven them, because of their trespass that they have trespassed against you.
8 O Lord, to us *belongs* confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against you. -Daniel 9

Daniel continued, saying mercies and forgiveness belong to Yahweh, who had warned us in His law and through His prophets. Yahweh had told us that the curses of evil that we have experienced would be poured out upon us because of our rebellion and wickedness:

- 9 To the Lord our God *belong* mercies and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against him;
10 Neither have we obeyed the voice of Yahweh our God, to walk in his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets.
11 Yes, all Israel has transgressed your law, even by departing, that they might not obey your voice; therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that *is* written in the law of Moses the servant of God, because we have sinned against him.

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- 12 And he has confirmed his words, which he spoke against us, and against our judges that judged us, by bringing upon us a great evil: for under the whole heaven has not been done as has been done upon Jerusalem.

- 13 As *it is* written in the law of Moses, all this evil has come upon us: yet made we not our prayer before Yahweh our God, that we might turn from our iniquities, and understand your truth.

- 14 Therefore has Yahweh watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us: for Yahweh our God *is* righteous in all his works which he does: for we obeyed not his voice.

- 15 And now, O Lord our God, that have brought your people forth out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and have gotten you renown, as at this day; we have sinned, we have done wickedly. -Daniel 9

Even though we are sinners, Daniel continued, you, Yahweh, are righteous. I pray, he said, that you hear my prayer and forgive us because of your great mercy:

- 16 O Lord, according to all your righteousness, I beseech you, let your anger and your fury be turned away from your city Jerusalem, your holy mountain: because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and your people *have become* a reproach to all *that are* about us.

- 17 Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of your servant, and his supplications, and cause your face to shine upon your sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake.

- 18 O my God, incline your ear, and hear; open your eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by your name: for we do not present our supplications before you for our righteousness, but for your great mercies. -Daniel 9

Oh Yahweh, we are the ones who are called by your name, Daniel continued, hear my prayer and forgive us:

- 19 O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, listen and do; defer not, for your own sake, O my God: for your city and your people are called by your name. -Daniel 9

As we pray for freedom through forgiveness of our sins, as President Daniel did, we must also realize that his request followed his repentance. Remember, John came first preaching repentance. *Then* Yahshua (Jesus) came as our Savior:

- 23 Of this man's seed has God according to *his* promise raised unto Israel a Savior, Yahshua:

- 24 When John had first preached before his coming the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. -Acts 13

Because of His great mercies, Yahshua paid with His life to free us from our sins. As President Daniel shows us, we can expect Yahweh to hear the prayers that are offered to Him in humble repentance. That is when those who believe on Yahshua and continue in the truth of His Word have the promise of freedom:

- 31 Then said Yahshua to those Jews which believed on him, If you continue in my word, *then* are you my disciples indeed;

- 32 And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. -John 8