

Supplication for a Sinful People

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Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake. O my God, incline thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by thy name: for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies. O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people are called by thy name.

—Daniel 9:17–19

On June 26, 2013, our Supreme Court voted in favor of homosexual marriage. I believe all of us have heard about this court case and have been praying since. The Supreme Court of the land overturned the wishes of voters in California and voted in favor of homosexual marriage. Not just the voters in California, but the law of God was despised by our Supreme Court. They ruled against God's commands and God's desire for people on earth. They went against His law and His Word. This ruling is significant because it is an indication of deeper issues that we face. This was a death blow, and we felt it when this case was heard. It is indeed an indication of deeper issues, deeper spiritual problems that we face as a nation. America is morally bankrupt—and not just America. Western nations such as Canada and in Europe are morally bankrupt.

While Western society is morally bankrupt, the modern church in our society today is spiritually bankrupt.

On June 30, 2013, the Crystal Cathedral in California held its last service. Some of you may know about this church through The Hour of Power radio and TV program with Robert Schuler who preached many years in that church. It was a very large church building in California, and it has become an icon of the modern evangelical church in North America. This large church was famous for its teaching of “positive thinking.” Many politicians and world leaders visited and worshipped there, enjoying the music from the very large organ as well. But in the last few years they have had problematic transitions of leadership and economic crises; three years ago, the church declared bankruptcy. The building was sold.

This is a symbol of the bankruptcy of the modern church in North America. The power of positive thinking hasn’t really gotten us anywhere, has it? Society becomes morally penniless when religion becomes only a message of positive thinking that encourages us to get through the week, when the church is only a social club or entertainment, when the church no longer influences society with a prophetic voice speaking against the sins of society, when a nation of so-called Christians violates God’s law and despises His Word. Then society and religion are both spiritually insolvent. There are corrupt judges, politicians who blaspheme God, shallow religion, moral brokenness, idolatry of athletes and music stars, sexual pollution, devalued life, degradation, and selfish greed on every hand—bankruptcy.

Daniel’s prayer in chapter 9 speaks to us in this situation. In a society that seems hopeless Daniel’s prayer gives us an excellent example of spiritual leadership. He himself lived at a low time in the church, a time of desolation of God’s people and of the city called by God’s name. But he sets an example not only by his attitude and tone by which he addresses God in his prayer, but also by the words of

this prayer, a pattern prayer for us as we live in a society of increasing sinfulness. Let us consider how to supplicate for a sinful people by examining Daniel's confession, his confidence, and his request.

Daniel's Confession

When Daniel Prayed

The book of Daniel is divided into two sections. Chapters 1 through 6 are largely historical narrative with some commentary; chapters 7 through 12 are largely prophecy with some commentary. Daniel 9, however, is an exception to the second part. The first nineteen verses are Daniel's prayer, particularly verses 4–19, for his people. The last part of the chapter, verses 20–27, is God's immediate message of response to Daniel. We will be looking only at the first nineteen verses together.

Daniel's life history in Babylon was long. He lived to be an old man, and through several regime changes Daniel was an influential leader. Chronologically, chapter 9 probably comes just before or just after chapter 6. Notice in verse 1, "In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes." This occurred when Darius was in power in Babylon. Remember the story in chapter 6 of Daniel in the lion's den? Chapter 9 is about at this time, at the end of Daniel's life, after enduring many challenges and problems due to his faithfulness and integrity by God's grace.

Daniel lived in a time of great political intrigue. First was Artaxerxes, then there was his son—kingdoms were rising and falling. Then the Medes and Persians came, and Darius took over. Later there was Cyrus. Through the changes, Daniel was set over the prominent leaders and was later elevated to a position of even higher authority, to the third or second in command. World powers were shifting. Later prophecies speak about the goats and the

different animals as representing world powers that were coming and going and fighting each other. This was a time of political upheaval.

Spiritually, it was also a time of turmoil. God's people had been exiled and Jerusalem was destroyed. The city that was called by God's name lay in ruin. The temple was burned with fire, God's people were now in exile in Babylon and other Israelites were scattered throughout the nations. Yet we read in this book of Daniel that God the Most High is still directing the affairs of men, still guiding the events of history, all for the sake of His people, preparing them for the coming Prince (see the second half of this chapter—the coming of Christ and His eternal kingdom). Daniel knew about world events. Undoubtedly he was praying three times a day for these very issues.

Daniel Confesses for a Rebellious Nation

Verses 5 and 6 reveal Daniel confessing that “[w]e have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments: neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets, which spake in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land.” Verse 13 adds, “All this evil is come upon us: yet made we not our prayer before the LORD our God, that we might turn from our iniquities, and understand thy truth.” This is Daniel's prayer confessing the sins of an unruly nation that rebelled against God's law and authority and rejected His prophets. Daniel admits that his people despise the Word of the Lord. The book of Daniel comes historically toward the end of the Old Testament, so all the prophets from Moses forward—Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Micah—pleaded with the people, “Hear the word of the Lord, you rebellious nation.” But the nation rejected God's Word and refused to repent,

even after experiencing God's punishment. Again, Daniel is acknowledging these evils to the Lord.

Can we claim anything different today? These words resonate with us, do they not? We are living in a similar situation, increasingly so, as our society becomes godless and pluralistic. Christianity is one of many options and often not a good option at that. Our nation has defied the Lord's authority. The nations rage, and the people imagine vain things. They do not want the Lord to reign over them; they want to live their own way, no matter how difficult or sinful those lifestyles may be. Our nation has rejected God's prophets and the Word of the Lord that has come to us so clearly from the Bible for many years. Our nation and society refuse to repent. Perhaps that is our greatest sin. We know our sin; we see it; it is clear before our eyes. We know what the truth is but we refuse to obey it. We are a stubborn nation, as the prophets say.

Daniel takes all these sins to God in prayer. While he was busy serving in the government, living as a godly witness in the society, active in what God had called him to do, Daniel takes these problems prayerfully to the Lord. At least three times a day, he pleaded! We learn from his example. This is an example, by God's grace, of spiritual leadership.

Daniel's Confession over the Condition of the Church

Daniel also laments the state of the church in his day. This was really a burning issue on his heart. His heart's cry is clearly for the people called by the Lord's name, the city of God in desolation. The sanctuary, the temple, had been burned with fire. The people of God are "a reproach to all that are about" them and "a byword" among the nations. This was Daniel's spiritual lament to God in prayer. He takes these things to God's ear. He doesn't complain about others or become discouraged. Maybe he

did have times of discouragement; it does not say that here. But we do find him praying, bringing these things to the Lord in prayer: “Lord, Thy people are a byword among the nations,” which is an echo of Psalm 44, isn’t it? These problems motivate him to prayer.

Daniel’s Personal Confession of Sin against God

It is not just for the nation or the church—Daniel’s confession turns personal as well. Daniel personally confesses his own sin. Look at how he prays: “*We* have sinned.” Let’s get a grip on who is praying here. This is Daniel, the man of God. Ezekiel holds up Daniel, Noah, and Job as examples; we look to them as holy men, perhaps some of the most holy examples in all of the Old Testament. We don’t find any sins of Daniel listed in the history of God’s inspired truth. No doubt he was a sinner as we all are; he needed grace and he experienced that grace. But we are talking about Daniel, the righteous man of God, here. And what does he say? “*We* have sinned.”

Was Daniel guilty of the sins of his nation? When he was just a boy, Jerusalem was burned, and he was taken into exile in Babylon. He was just a boy when his nation was destroyed, and he lived with integrity and righteousness in a godless community. This is Daniel. He lived godly in an ungodly society. He was known by all the officials in Babylon, the heads of the government, as being blameless. And yet he prays, “*We* have sinned.”

Is it fair to say he is guilty of sin? Daniel doesn’t get distracted by that. He knows he is a sinner. We all have sins to confess—personal, national, and church sins. Daniel knew his own heart. When we are honest with ourselves, we cannot hide our sins before God. By virtue of being part of this sinful nation, he bore responsibility for its sin.

We are called to live as godly witnesses in society, and yet we find ourselves often being the opposite, not living as we should. Parents, we try to raise our children in the fear of God. We try to do it the right way and guide them so they will also be built on this foundation. And yet what happens? We find sin in our hearts. Church leaders, we are called to be examples in spiritual leadership, and yet we have our own sins to confess. And so did Daniel. He knew his own heart and he knew the sins that lived there; thus he prays, “We have sinned.” If we know our own hearts, we will pray the same. When we look at the sins of others, we are often filled with self-righteousness. But we all know our own hearts to some degree; a study of our own hearts is healthy if it leads us to confess our sins. That is a good activity for the Lord’s Day—to set aside time to confess our sins to the Lord in prayer, knowing that He is just and righteous to forgive them. Daniel knew this.

Consider Daniel’s Posture in Prayer

The word “posture” refers to our position. What is Daniel’s spiritual posture in his prayer to God? He lived with a view of two realities: Daniel lived with a view of the *holy sovereign God*. As we read this prayer, and the entire book of Daniel, this theme emerges: the sovereignty of God. Daniel was living among sovereigns and kings and powerful people, but the God he worshipped is the Sovereign One, the Lord who made heaven and earth. Daniel’s prayer magnifies this sovereignty: “And I prayed unto the LORD my God, and made my confession, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God” (v. 4). He respected this God of sovereign power, this holy God who is in total control of all events in the universe. His prayer is in the posture of reverent humility before God.

Daniel's second viewpoint was of *himself as a vulnerable sinner*. So we see two postures—a holy sovereign God, but also himself as a vulnerable sinner. This great man of God and influential leader is here on his knees in repentance and confession. He is a vulnerable sinner coming to a righteous God, pleading for mercy.

What is your posture in prayer before this God? For some people it is *indifference*—"I do not really care. I do not care what is happening in the world today, and I do not really care too much about who God is. Does He even exist? I do not know. Does it matter? I do not care." This apathy is easy to find in our society today. We are bombarded with this indifference, and we are influenced by it as well.

But there is also in society today, and in our own hearts, *defiance*. "I do not want to listen; I want my own way. I do not want to obey God's law as He commanded."

Or perhaps we are better educated about religious matters and our posture before God is not indifference or defiance but *demanding*: "God, I need this and I need that! Why is this happening to me? I want answers now!" We demand our rights.

In contrast, Daniel's posture is one of *vulnerability for sins committed*. "We have sinned and done wrong." He is submissive to the Lord's law. And not only that, he also displays *expectant hope* because he knew the Lord's great mercy.

Daniel's Confidence

The Grounds for Daniel's Request

Where is Daniel's hope placed? We know from the historical narrative of this book that Daniel's situation was not all that positive. In fact, it seemed hopeless. Either before or after this chapter, he was thrown into the lions' den. He certainly was a lone voice in a godless society, not just in

the political and socio-economic spheres but the spiritual as well. The city of God lay ruined. Society was filled with idol worshippers, and even God's people were not faithful. Daniel's situation seemed beyond remedy.

With recent events on our minds we can be overwhelmed by a sense of hopelessness. What can we really do if the foundations are destroyed? What can the righteous do? Do we have hope for our nations? Do we have hope for our countries once built on Christian principles?

I was thinking on a recent 4th of July that it is so good to celebrate the blessing of independence and freedom. But if we worship a Christless freedom, what is that but an idol? We demand rights without repentance. What is that but defiance to Almighty God? How can we celebrate the idolatry of misunderstood freedom? Christ alone has set us free. Christ alone has saved us from the yoke of slavery to sin. And yet our nation has, for the most part, forgotten Christ. We want nothing to do with the Lord and His anointed. It does seem hopeless. Has any modern country ever turned around from the course that we have set for ourselves?

But Daniel does not lose heart. He is not distracted by his own sinfulness or the seeming hopelessness of his society. Rather, he concludes his prayer with expectant hope in God, confident and assured through faith in Christ that God will be true to His Word.

Three Reasons for Daniel's Confidence

1. *Expectant hope in God's compassion.* "O my God, incline thine ear, and hear...for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies" (v. 18). This man of God, this spiritual leader, this man of integrity, had nothing personal to claim, and the situation was hopeless—yet he prays, "But because of thy mercies, have compassion." That word "compassion"

(great mercy) has the idea of tender compassion, like the natural affection of a father for his child (Ps. 103) or a mother for her child, a parental bond of affection, of pity (Micah 7:17), of lovingkindness. This is the word Daniel uses here: “For thy name’s sake have compassion.” God sees His people as a father sees a suffering child. God looks upon His own people with the tender mercies of a loving Father God. This is the claim Daniel makes; this is where he places his hope—in the God of all compassion, of tender mercies. He grounds his request on the unchanging truth of God’s character and His steadfast love for sinners.

That is where we find our assurance, too. It is not in what we have done or not done. It is not in saying, “Oh, I have failed here, I have fallen short there.” It is not in looking at ourselves that we find assurance of faith, but in looking to this God of compassion. It is the Father’s lovingkindness for His children.

2. *Expectant hope in God’s name and glory.* “O Lord, hear...for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people are called by thy name” (v. 19). “Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord’s sake” (v. 17). Daniel prays for the name of the Lord that is being despised and has become a byword among the nations. God’s people are seen as fools and God’s name is not glorified. And we now have a prayer request because God’s name is at stake. It is not our name or our honor. It is not even our nation, our own country, or our own freedom. That is all secondary. God’s name is being despised, and what will we do about it? It drives Daniel to prayer.

Learn the power of prayer that Daniel knew. He did not hope in himself for anything, but his expectation was in the God of compassion and mercy, and he prayed for the

name, the sake, the cause, and the kingdom of our Lord God and His Christ.

God responded to Daniel's prayer. Interestingly, He responds with a prophecy about the coming Messiah, the coming Prince who would rule His people. A Prince would come and restore His people, restore the honor of His name, and institute a kingdom not made with hands, like a stone cut without hands that would become a great mountain and fill the earth. This was the One who was coming and Daniel's prayer is answered immediately with a prophecy of the coming One, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our hope in troubled times must be focused on Christ. In Him we find the tender mercies and the fatherly compassion of our God. In Him we are washed clean of our sins and are delivered from our unrighteousness. In Him we see in full display the righteousness of God revealed. We see His mercy and His love. Our sins are atoned for, the covenant promises are fulfilled in Christ, and the glory of God is revealed in this world. And He has come! He has established righteousness and His kingdom will fill the earth as the waters cover the sea. That is a promise for God's glory. Do you believe it? Our Lord Savior, our King, will be victorious. The nations rage, the people imagine vain things, but Christ is on the throne. How encouraging!

3. *Expectant hope in God's promises.* Daniel knew the promises of God. Later in this chapter, an angel visits him. I don't think any of us has been visited by an angel, and why do we want angels anyway? We have the Word of God, which is so much better. But Daniel was visited by an angel while he was praying, fasting, and studying God's Word. He was reading the Bible. Daniel, the revealer of dreams, the one to whom angels came, was busy reading his Bible. He had his priorities straight; he

knew what he needed. He was reading two books. One was Jeremiah: “In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem” (v. 2). Daniel was reading Jeremiah 25:11–12, and notice even here he calls it “the Word of the LORD.” This prophecy was written only seventy years earlier and had already been recognized as Scripture. And he was also reading the books of Moses, as referred to in verses 13–14: “As it is written in the law of Moses, all this evil is come upon us: yet made we not our prayer before the LORD our God,” etc. Daniel was reading Deuteronomy where it says, “If my people do not serve me they will be followed by the curse and all these evils will come upon them.”

Daniel was busy reading Scripture during times of trouble and strife, and we can learn from that. Being in the Word of God gave him spiritual balance and spiritual perspective as he lived in a sinful society. Let’s not get distracted by all the events taking place. Let’s not get distracted by extra-biblical media, or prophecies, or even angels. It is the Word of God that gives us stability and perspective in times like these.

We need what Daniel had: spiritual balance, spiritual perspective, and confidence in God’s compassion, God’s glory, and God’s promises. Do you have this confidence? Do you live with this assurance in God’s glorious mercy in Christ Jesus? Perhaps you, like Daniel, are groaning over sin—sin in the world, sin in your own heart. Take it to the Lord in prayer. Perhaps we are wrestling over particular issues in our families, in our church, or in this community, and we see enormous challenges. But the hopelessness of the present situation is never a cause for us to forsake or to reject our hope in the God of all mercy. In fact, it should motivate us to more faithfulness, more earnestness, more

seriousness as we petition our Lord who is on the throne to hear and to turn back the evil that surrounds us and to honor His own name through us in all the earth.

Some of us are weeping for our nation and for the situation of our society. Take this also to Christ, the Giver of true freedom, the One from whom true freedom comes. Let us confess our sins together. We have sinned; we have done unrighteously. But spiritual assurance comes from meditating on the promises of God. His truth, His glory will fill the earth as the waters cover the sea. It comes from meditating on the glory of God revealed in Christ. It comes from meditating on God's character itself, God's compassion for sinners. This is the confidence that Daniel demonstrates in this prayer. That is the confidence upon which he makes his request, which brings us to our third heading.

Daniel's Requests

Where Daniel Makes His Request

It does not come at the beginning, does it? He actually saves his request until the very last verses. The location of his request is also instructive for us. He makes this request in verse 19 only after repentance and confession with a confident trust in the mercies of our God and the glory of His name. He makes this request after he puts himself in the posture of humility before this holy God, as a vulnerable sinner in need of grace. Then he makes his request. Because you see, true prayer is the ongoing activity of faith and repentance, and obedience as well. Prayer is not a laundry list of things we need, want, or desire. The Lord does say, "Bring your needs to me," but prayer is ultimately a spiritual exercise that gets us into a proper healthy posture before God. Have you worked out lately? Are you exercising? Sometimes older men will ask each other, "What is your exercise program? Are you staying healthy?" Prayer is our spiritual exercise that puts us in a

proper posture before Almighty God. We exercise. I think I need to do more exercising. I need a better exercise program, because my prayers do not compare to this prayer of Daniel. Daniel's prayer demonstrates for us an example of what our prayers should be.

What Daniel Requests from God

"O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God" (v. 19). Daniel asks God to work. He was busy himself in his position of influence; he was setting a godly example of integrity, righteousness, and blamelessness, but that wasn't enough. Daniel begs God to work. Listen to him in verse 17: "O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications." "Hear the prayer of Thy servant"—we can pray that, can't we? We don't look to ourselves or to our spiritual leaders, as godly as they may be. We look to Christ. "O God, hear the prayer of Thy servant. Listen to His supplications." The Prince, the Messiah who worked redemption, whose saving blood washes us clean, is now the King on the throne. He is seated by His Father's side, all victorious and all powerful, and we pray, "Hear the prayers of Thy servant." Jesus is praying for us. He is making supplication even now for His church to the Father, saying, "Father, give My people grace. I don't pray, Father, that Thou wilt take them from the world, but give them grace to live godly in the world. I pray that Thou wilt keep them in Thy truth, Father, because I have died for them." Christ is praying for us right now. That is really our prayer, isn't it? "Father, hear the prayer of Thy Son. Listen to His prayer."

There is more to Daniel's request. "O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive." Here we find the confession of sin and unrighteousness. He does not say, "Forgive *them*," but he says, "Forgive *us*; we have sinned." Daniel prays, "O

Lord, hearken.” In other words, “Give attention to what is happening. Look, see the desolations of Thy city and Thy church—the people called by Thy name. Hearken, pay attention, do not turn away from us in Thy wrath but remember mercy. Remember who Thou art; remember Thy favorite characteristic. Take action. O Lord, do.”

Many of the psalms celebrate the work of the Lord. The sovereign Judge of the nations is coming to judge the people in righteousness and restore truth and justice. The King of the empires is coming with power and authority to undo all wrong and to usher in a reign of righteousness. “O Lord, do. Take action, O Lord, take action. The nations despise Thy truth; society is godless; we have sinned; the city is in desolation; the church is in ruins. O Lord, do take action; Lord Jesus come quickly, come with power and with righteousness and justice, and let Thy name be known.” That is Daniel’s request.

We can’t help but echo him, can we? We who know the Lord and love Him and have given our lives for His service, in whatever our calling, echo that prayer in our hearts. It resonates with us because we desire the same thing—“O Lord, hear for the sake of Thy Son. O Lord forgive, we have sinned. O Lord, give attention, hearken, see our needs, see the desolations that we have brought upon ourselves and take action, O Lord, take action. O Lord, do.”

What do we need in a spiritually bankrupt society? What do we need when the modern church is morally and spiritually bankrupt? “O Lord, do. Come with omnipotent power, come with Thy Spirit, come with fresh revival among us. For the sake of Thy name and of Thy people called by Thy name, give repentance, give revival. Restore us that we may rejoice in Thy goodness and in Thy glory. Make Thy face to shine upon Thy people again.”

Revival must begin with the church. We personally need to be revived by the power of the Holy Spirit, speaking the truth of Christ afresh in our lives, in our churches, and in our families. Death to spiritual apathy; repentance of our materialism and our waywardness and our sinfulness and our pride; restoration of holiness. We need revival in our hearts and in our families. What else can turn around the rapid decline? It is not hopeless with Christ the King on the throne; not with Him praying at the Father's side. Our hope is in Christ.

What Are You Praying For?

It is easy to be distracted and discouraged by all that is happening around us. We can be discouraged even by our sinful apathy and our spiritual sin that make us lose sight of our Savior. But this is our hope: the Savior promises mercy. We are all sinners; we all need grace, whether we have known Christ for years or do not yet know Him. We need the Spirit to work these prayers in our rebellious and stubborn hearts so that we could cry out, "O Lord, take away my unbelief. O Lord, give me faith in Christ afresh. Give me the posture of humility, contrition, and repentance. Help me to see Thy greatness, Thy power, Thy majesty, Thy sovereign ability, Thy mercy, and Thy grace. Give me this assurance of faith that Thou wilt be true to Thy own Word and honor Thy promises that are sealed with Thy blood." That is what we need. Let's make that our prayer. "Holy Spirit, fill us with these holy desires so that we bow before King Jesus and worship Him as our Sovereign." That puts us in the right posture before God and before the watching world.

Conclusion

How do we respond in this present age of moral and spiritual bankruptcy? How do we deal with the current

events that cause us to fear for our children and for our grandchildren? Let me conclude with four responses from Daniel's example.

We Should Not Be Surprised by Evil

We will see the increase of evil, the rising tides of degradation, and the moral decadence of Western society. This is the result of spiritual bankruptcy and of sin in our hearts, in our churches, in our society. This has happened before and will continue to happen as long as there is unrighteousness and sin on earth.

It is undeniable that Western nations are morally bankrupt. The modern church at this time seems to be largely bankrupt. This was prophesied in Daniel's book. Kingdoms rise and kingdoms fall. The kingdom of Rome rose, and it fell. Kingdoms in Europe rose, and those kingdoms fell. America rose, and America will fall. Do not be surprised when desolations come on earth.

Trust in God's Kingdom, Not Man's

Do not put your reliance in political movements or religious organizations. We work for them, and should be busy trying to make a difference. We defend religious liberties and we stand up for morality. We seek for the best for our nation because we love her. We pray for our nations and our people and we celebrate the freedoms God has given us but we don't put our hope there. Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord our God. His Name is all glorious. His kingdom will come. His kingdom is sure and will never fail. His glory will fill the earth as the waters cover the sea.

Citizens of an Eternal Kingdom

The church is not dead. Christ's bride is still alive. Though dirtied by sin and in desolations at times, the church is

not dead and she will not die because our Christ is alive. He is risen from the dead and He reigns! His kingdom of Christ continues to be eternal. Our supreme Judge rules in His court of righteousness. Our King loves justice and delights in mercy. Is He your King? Are you a citizen of the heavenly kingdom by faith in Christ? That makes all the difference. Earthly kingdoms rise and fall. Eventually we all face death. But Christ's kingdom is eternal and unshakeable. Are you a citizen of Christ's kingdom?

Our Eternal Hope

We see the harbingers of the increase of evil. We hope it is not true, and we work that it will not be true, even though it seems that it might be true. We pray against it. We know that Christ is coming. We hear His footsteps. And when we see these things, we do not lose hope. We don't look to ourselves and give up in fear. Let fear motivate us to prayer. Unto Christ upon the throne we lift up our heads; we look up because our redemption is drawing nigh. Our King is coming. The Prince is on the throne. Our hope is eternal in our Savior, beyond this existence, beyond this political and economic situation. Our confidence in Christ is eternal if by faith we are made citizens of His kingdom and trust in Him. Therefore, "though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled.... [yet] there is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God" (Ps. 46:2–4). There is a church of God longing for His coming. There is an eternal throne of grace where our Savior even now is praying for us.

The Eternal Throne of Grace

This is our duty and our responsibility, following the example of Daniel, and even more so following the example of our Savior: to pray for Jerusalem, pray for the people

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of God, and for our families. We are to pray earnestly and passionately like Daniel. This is our duty and our glorious privilege as the people of God. We have a place to go—to the King on the throne—an eternal kingdom, and a grace that is always available. This is our glorious privilege, to pray to a God who hears, and who has acted, and who will come again. Amen.