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## DANIEL'S SHEPHERD LIFE AND GOD'S COMFORT

Daniel 9:1 – 10:21 (9:18,19)

“Give ear, our God, and hear; open your eyes and see the desolation of the city that bears your Name. We do not make requests of you because we are righteous, but because of your great mercy. Lord, listen! Lord, forgive! Lord, hear and act! For your sake, my God, do not delay, because your city and your people bear your Name.””

Dear heavenly Father, we thank you for your precious Word from the book of Daniel. You encourage us to shine like the stars for ever and ever by devoting ourselves to Bible study and grow as Bible teachers like Daniel. Thank you for gathering us here to listen your Word from Daniel chapter 9 and 10. Open our hearts and ears for your Word so we may learn from Daniel’s shepherd life. Let us receive your great comfort so we may hold on to your Word in this spiritually dark time and be used by you as global spiritual leaders. Thank you for the great privilege for me to reflect on your Word deeply and deliver this important message today. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Praise be to God for GLEF 2023, encouraging us with His great promise: “You will shine like the stars for ever and ever!” Today we can learn Daniel’s shepherd’s heart through his prayer for all his people. He pleaded with God in prayer and petition, in fasting, and in sackcloth and ashes. Why? It was because he remembered God’s promise and hope for his people through the word of God. He was very attentive to God’s word. Having spent most of his life in captivity in Babylon, he did not lose his desire to study the Scriptures. Daniel’s Bible study led him to repentant prayer for his people. God bless you to learn from Daniel’s intercessory prayer, coming with the sins of the students and young people of this generation to God. Let us grow as prayerful shepherds and shepherdesses so that the course of history can be changed.

### **1. Daniel’s intercessory prayer for His People (9:1-27)**

**First, Daniel is attentive to God's word.**

Let's look at verses 1-2.

The events took place in the first year of the rule of King Darius, which was 537 B.C. The Babylonian empire fell under the Median and Persian attacks. Daniel was about 82 years old at that time. He left his homeland when he was 14 years old and spent most of his life in Babylonian captivity. We can see that Daniel studied very carefully the book of Jeremiah, the prophet who prophesied shortly before the Babylonian captivity and died at its beginning. Chapter 29:10 says, *"This is what the Lord says, 'When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my good promise to bring you back to this place.'"*

Daniel must have read this prophecy many times, but here God opened his eyes to His promise. This was God's great revealing! Daniel's example inspires us to live a life of faithful Bible study with attention. The key thing of our faith is to go back to the Bible. How did Daniel react to Jeremiah's prophecy?

Let's look at verses 3-6. When Daniel found God's promise, his heart began to tremble with joy, and he immediately turned to God in prayer. He did not put off prayer until later. We can learn Daniel's attitude towards God's promises. We see that Daniel did not become discouraged by the external situation. All his life Daniel did his best to live before God, struggling with the compromises and temptations of a pagan environment. Daniel begins his prayer by turning to God, praising Him. Daniel knew God personally and deeply. To Daniel, the Lord was great, wonderful, faithful, and merciful. As Daniel repents of the sins of the people, he includes himself among them, showing his heart as a shepherd.

Let's read verses 7-8. Daniel prays for his people as a faithful shepherd. He counts the sins of his people as his own. When Daniel looked at his people, he saw that they were swallowed up in sin and needed the Lord. *Let us look at verse 9: "9 The Lord our God is merciful and forgiving, even though we have rebelled against him;"* Daniel knew that God was merciful and forgiving. At this time it may seem that God's work cannot be accomplished. Due to many opinions, disputes, and views, the very concept of a single truth has been erased. However, just as in Daniel's days, it is not necessary to focus on external factors, but to rely on the promises of God. Daniel prayed for his people with all his heart and soul so that the people could return to God. In our days, we can hold fast to God's promise and our personal relationship with Him to pray for Europe, Asia, America, and the whole world.

Let us look at verses 17-19: *"17 "Now, our God, hear the prayers and petitions of your servant. For your sake, Lord, look with favor on your desolate sanctuary. 18 Give ear, our God, and hear; open your eyes and see the desolation of the city that bears your Name. We do not make requests of you because we are righteous, but because of your great mercy. 19 Lord, listen! Lord, forgive! Lord, hear and act! For your sake, my God, do not delay, because your city and your people bear your Name."* Daniel prayed that God would make His history, look with His bright face upon the desolate holy place, and that He would lean His ear and hear them. We can see that Daniel wanted God's glory, he prayed that God might accomplish His plan for His glory. Daniel's prayer was pleasing to God because he was seeking God's glory.

Jesus, too, always sought God's glory in his prayers. In Matthew 6:9: "9 *"This, then, is how you should pray: 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,'"* and in John 17:1: *"After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed: 'Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you.'"* The main purpose of our prayer is for God's name to be glorified. When God's righteousness and mercy is here, His glory is also here. When Christ's forgiving love is there, then God's glory is multiplied.

Then, how could God's glory be revealed? Let us read the key verses 9:18,19 once again: "Give ear, our God, and hear; open your eyes and see the desolation of the city that bears your Name. We do not make requests of you because we are righteous, but because of your great mercy. Lord, listen! Lord, forgive! Lord, hear and act! For your sake, my God, do not delay, because your city and your people bear your Name." Daniel's heart burned for the city of Jerusalem to be fully restored as God's city. Daniel knew about the hopelessness of his

people because of their sins. However, he trusted in God's great mercy and sovereign and good plan to make His people a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. Filled with God's hope and God's heart for the spiritual restoration of His people, Daniel pleaded for God's great mercy. Young people in Russia live without any sense of purpose for their lives. Many of them suffer from depression and other mental and physical illnesses. But we can pray like Daniel for the spiritual restoration of Russian people...

## **Second, Daniel's vision for the future of Israel**

Let us look at verses 20-24.

As Daniel spoke, prayed and confessed his sins and the sins of his people, the Archangel Gabriel spoke to him. Verse 24 is the main one in this section. It is a symbolic prophecy that the seventy years of captivity were over, and the sins of the people were forgiven, and that the Anointed One, the Holy of Holies, would come. The number "seventy-seven" was symbolic, it means 70 times 7, would be 490. According to prophecy, from that time until the restoration of Jerusalem in 445 B.C., seven sevenths would pass. From that time until the incarnation of Jesus Christ there will be sixty-two sevenths. After that, according to God's promise, Christ is to be betrayed and die on the cross as the Lamb of God. After a certain period of time there will be a last seventh period. This period is the last period before the second coming of Christ.

Verse 26 says: *"26 After the sixty-two 'sevens,' the Anointed One will be put to death and will have nothing. The people of the ruler who will come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a flood: War will continue until the end, and desolations have been decreed."* The prophecy of Jesus' leaving Jerusalem and the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman ruler Titus was in 70 A.D. Although the Son of God came and died for the sins of men, this is not the end of the world. He rose again and will come again. And one day Jesus the Lord will end all abomination of desolation and the desolator will perish. The spiritual significance of this is the salvation accomplished by Jesus.

We are living at the end of times, after the first coming of Christ. We are already forgiven and saved from sin. What shall we do now? Our mission as Christians and shepherds is to spread the Word of God, to testify Him through our lives, words, and actions. Through this chapter we have been able to learn the intercessory prayer of a shepherd like Daniel, how God works in the history of a nation and the whole world, and what plan the Lord has for us. We need to trust the Lord completely in all life's situations, pray passionately, repent of our sins, and seek ways to glorify God. God bless you to live as true and prayerful shepherds like Daniel for the spiritual revival of your generation. Amen.

## **2. God Answers Daniel's Prayer (10:1-21)**

Let us see 10:1: The Persian king Cyrus freed the Israelites from 70 years of Babylonian captivity. God aroused the spirit of Cyrus and commanded him, so Cyrus gave permission for the Jews to return to Jerusalem and build God's house. In 537 B.C. 50,000 Jews returned to Jerusalem under the leadership of Zerubbabel and began rebuilding the temple. But because of the interference of the Samaritans, the work was stopped. Fifty-eight years later, a second group of 1,800 Jews under the leadership of Ezra returned to Jerusalem. There was a strong spiritual awakening at that time. After another 14 years in 444 B.C., a third group of Jews under Nehemiah came and began rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem. Despite the intervention

of Sanballat, Tobiah, and other opponents, the walls were rebuilt in 52 days. The events of Daniel chapter 10 relate to the third year of Cyrus' reign, when the returning Jews faced opposition during the rebuilding of the temple. The walls of Jerusalem had not yet been rebuilt.

Let's look at verses 4-7:

After three weeks of fasting and prayer, on the twenty-fourth day of the first month on the bank of the great river Tigris, Daniel had a vision of a man dressed in linen clothes. The image described in these verses is very similar to the image of Jesus that the apostle John saw on the island of Patmos, as Revelation 1:12-16 says. The linen robe indicates that Jesus is our High Priest; the golden loins show that He is our King; the body as a topaz and the face as a form of lightning symbolize His authority and the glory of the Creator. Also the eyes like burning lamps show His discernment, the hands like shining copper signify that He is the Judge. His voice is like the voice of the multitude or the murmur of the waters of many. This image of Jesus is the image of the coming King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

There were other people beside Daniel. But only Daniel alone saw this vision, his companions were struck with great fear and ran away to hide. Only Daniel had the privilege of seeing the glorious image of the Son of Man. God showed this vision to Daniel as he humbled himself and spoke to Him heartily in prayer.

Let's look at verses 8-11:

When Daniel saw the Son of Man, he had no strength left, and the look on his face was extremely changed, and there was no longer any liveliness in him. When Daniel heard His voice, he immediately fell on his face and lay face down on the ground.

Let's look at verses 12-14:

The Son of Man gently touched Daniel and supported him and gave him strength. He said he had heard Daniel's prayer from the first day he began to pray. But there was a spiritual struggle going on during Daniel's prayer. Here "prince of Persia" means the devil who ruled over the kings of Persia. The Son of Man went to Daniel, but because of the devil's influence, God's answer to Daniel's prayer was delayed for 3 weeks. During this delay Daniel was able to pray insistently and patiently. Somehow the devil confronted the Son of Man, but it only lasted a certain amount of time. Satan and all fallen angels are already cut off to eternal destruction. No one can stand against Jesus Christ. In that battle Michael, one of the first princes, came to the rescue and supported the Son of Man.

Here we see that our true enemy is Satan. We sometimes think that other people or external factors are to blame, but they are not. Our real enemy is the devil. When we preach and invite sheep, and encounter rejection, we are actually engaged in an active spiritual struggle for our hearts and for the hearts of our sheep. Temptation can come even to those who are surrounded by God's Word all the time through self-righteousness, pride, and compromise with the world. We must know that our enemy Satan is strong, but God is much stronger. It is very important for us to fight not as we want to, but rather to become clothed in God's word.

In verses 15-17 The Son of Man announced to Daniel what would happen to his people in the end times, as the vision refers to the distant days. When Daniel heard this, he was numb and his strength was gone, but the Son of Man touched his mouth and he began to speak. But Daniel could only confess his weakness. Then the Man strengthened him with His strength and gave him support. Let us read verses 18 and 19 together: *„18 Again the one who looked like a man touched me and gave me strength. 19 "Do not be afraid, you who are highly esteemed," he said. "Peace! Be strong now; be strong." When he spoke to me, I was strengthened and said, "Speak, my lord, since you have given me strength." Let us also look at*

verses 20-21: „So he said, "20 Do you know why I have come to you? Soon I will return to fight against the prince of Persia, and when I go, the prince of Greece will come; 21 but first I will tell you what is written in the Book of Truth.(No one supports me against them except Michael,your prince." We see that there are continually enemies of truth in the world who are controlled by the devil. However, we may hear God’s comfort: “Do not be afraid! Peace! Be strong now; be strong.” No matter how powerful the powers of evil are, we can have confidence that God will fight for us and bless the prayers of the shepherds of His flock. Let us live like Daniel as true shepherds who pray for Europe, Asia, America, and the whole world wholeheartedly.

Let us read the key verses 9:18,19: “Give ear, our God, and hear; open your eyes and see the desolation of the city that bears your Name. We do not make requests of you because we are righteous, but because of your great mercy. Lord, listen! Lord, forgive! Lord, hear and act! For your sake, my God, do not delay, because your city and your people bear your Name. ””

*Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for Your word that we have received. Let us be like Daniel, who prayed for his people with a shepherd heart. We pray for your mercy and give us strength to stay in your word in every situation of our lives. Thank you for the GLEF 2023 and let us grow as a spiritual community of shepherds and shepherdesses for our generation. In Jesus’s name, Amen.*