

Daniel 9:1-10—God’s Unstoppable Kingdom: Another Hindrance

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: My father always warned us when we were going to start any chore by saying: “Clear the work place first.” He wanted to be sure that nothing would impede 阻碍 us from properly doing the job. We thought that removing obstacles was just wasting time that we could use for playing. Now we realize that he was wiser than we!

This principle similarly applies to the task of having dominion for Jesus Christ... You too need to remove any obstacle from having dominion for him. One of those obstacles is unconfessed sin 不承认的罪, personal, ecclesiastical, or national. This is what you will hear from God’s Word today.

Our headings are: **You need to confess personal, ecclesiastical, and national sins, What must your prayer of confession look like, and On what basis does God forgive your sins? Mercy.**

Our goals are: **That you will see that sin is a hindrance 阻碍 to the spread of Christ’s kingdom and that you will take the time regularly to confess your sins, the church’s sins, and the nation’s sins.**

You Need to Confess Personal, Ecclesiastical, and National Sins

1 In the **first year of Darius** the son of Ahasuerus, of the lineage of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans—2 in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood **by the books** the number of the years **specified by the word of the LORD through Jeremiah** the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations 荒废 of Jerusalem.

1. During the days of the Babylonian kings, **Daniel had learned that God’s kingdom was going to expand in an unstoppable way to the ends of the earth, just like God had said to David and the other prophets.** Daniel learned that the Stone (Jesus Christ) cut without hands was going to destroy other nations, expand, fill the whole earth, and bring all the nations under the Stone’s feet. But that did not stop Daniel from **confirming and reconfirming truth through further study of God’s Word.** Daniel would have had hope for this because Jeremiah has said that the captivity would only last for 70 years.

Jeremiah 29:10 For thus says the LORD: After seventy years are completed at Babylon, I will visit you and perform My good word toward you, and cause you to return to this place.

Jeremiah 25:11 `And this whole land shall be a desolation 荒废 and an astonishment, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.

BTW, **no substantive 实质上 truth is ever – ever – taught in one place.**) Further, what treasures and truths you find in God’s Word...if you would only look...what confirmations...what promises!

2. Daniel studied the **old prophecies of Jeremiah**, who was long dead, and soon **confirmed** what he believed, but what Israel **did not fully realize: The 70 years of captivity was a result of sin**-constant serious sins against covenant God. And even though the 70 years were about up (this was the 1st year of Medo-Persian rule of Babylon), they were not yet freed because there was no true repentance. So God’s promise of a worldwide kingdom was being hindered.

3. **What were some of those sins of which Judah was guilty and did not repent?** You can get an idea from the years of captivity – 70. **Judah had failed** to properly honor the 7th day, the Sabbath. So God said he would give the land rest for 70 years. Also, they abused the widows, orphans, and foreigners. All of these things started with corrupted 贪污 leaders. And these things were tied together. The love of money caused the Sabbath to become a weariness to the Jews...and they then continued that love of money by abusing the poor and refusing to be generous with the needy.

3 Then I set my face toward the Lord God to make **request by prayer and supplications 恳求** with fasting 禁食, sackcloth, and ashes 披麻蒙灰

4. **Daniel not only wanted to preach and plea for repentance, he also wanted to practice repentance. So Daniel began the process of serious confession of sins** on behalf of the Jews. Daniel had the right attitude in prayer. He did not treat the problem of sin of the covenant people of God lightly. He was determined (he set his face), to plead with God. In order to add **weight to his request he...**

a. **Fasted**, showing the sacrificing of the body to put emphasis on the soul.

b. **Put on sackcloth** (itchy camel’s hair clothing) to show that he would give up comforts to pray.

c. **Put ashes on his head to show the depth** of his sorrow, reminding God that he is but dust and therefore needed help.

5. **God’s rich promises (like freedom of the Jews, or heaven for you today) do not excuse you from prayer and confession of sins.** Rather, God’s promises must excite you and encourage you to pray. (No wonder Daniel prayed 3 times a day. This episode was before he was fed to the lions by Darius.) Furthermore, **you too must diligently confess**

your sins to your Redeemer that he might heal and forgive. Indeed we are captives without physical chains! Why are afraid to discipline their children today? Why are people afraid at work to say that homosexuality is wrong? Why are Christians afraid to say that feeding lazy people is not the government's business...or afraid to say that capital punishment is necessary...or afraid to say that no unnecessary business should be opened on the Sabbath? Christianity lost its influence because it lost its moorings. We are like captives...afraid to speak... We failed God. We should have dominion but now we are suffering.

What must your prayer of confession look like?

4 And I prayed to the **LORD my God**, and made confession, and said, "O Lord, great and **awesome** **可畏 God**, who **keeps His covenant and mercy** with those who love Him, and with those who keep His commandments,

1. There are different types of prayer, but this was Daniel's prayer of confession

2. Look at the way Daniel started this prayer – **his prayer had direction**. He said he was praying to Jehovah – **his personal covenant God – my God**. (Since there is no other God, those who pray to other gods are sinning.) And you can only pray to God through Jesus Christ. (So if you don't believe in Jesus Christ, you can't pray.)

3. Daniel **humbly addressed God as an awesome God**. Now the word "awesome" in our text is not to be understood as "cool," as we use it today. We say that the video game was "awesome." But this word, when properly used, meant that God must be viewed with awe – awe at his greatness and awe at his goodness. The old word was "dreadful 敬畏" in the sense that God was serious about removing sin...and powerful to remove his people's enemies.

4. Daniel then acknowledged that God was **a covenant keeping God**, and **a merciful God**, and a loving God, to those who keep his commands. God had never failed Judah. **What a wise way to start a prayer!** He did not make demands or claim an earned right (不是) 我们所赚得的权利 to ask for forgiveness. He went a child asking of a father.

5 "we have **sinned and committed iniquity** 作了恶 **we have done wickedly** and **rebelled**, even by departing from Your precepts and Your judgments 诫命典章

5. On the contrary, **Daniel acknowledged that his people had broken faith** – they had violated the covenant agreement God made with them. Daniel confessed the same sins in **3 ways**. a. Judah **had sinned and committed iniquity**. b. Judah **had done wickedly**. c. Judah had **been rebellious – stiff-necked** 硬着颈项. **Daniel's words were carefully chosen, acknowledging that his people were guilty beyond doubt, with 3 witnesses**. Instead of being in covenant with God, they entered into covenant with sin, which resulted in their spiritual and physical slavery. Daniel was implying again that **God was just to send them into slavery**...

6 "Neither have we heeded 听从 Your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings and our princes, to our fathers and all the people of the land.

6. Daniel was fully conscious, not only of sinning against God, but of the fact that **they had rejected God's earlier warnings** through his prophets not to sin against him. They had clearly rejected God's warning through Moses (when the covenant was promulgated 颁布) and Solomon (when the temple was consecrated 奉献).

2Chronicles 36:16 But they mocked 戏弄 the messengers of God, despised His words, and scoffed 讥消 at His prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against His people, till *there was no remedy* 无法挽救

IOW 换句话说, they should have known better, they did know better, but they didn't do better. And since sin is a reproach to any people, it hindered the task of dominion.

7 "O Lord, righteousness belongs to You, but to us shame of face, as it is this day—to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and all Israel, **those near and those far** off in all the countries to which You have driven them, because of the unfaithfulness which they have committed against You.

7. Daniel then **justified God, clearing him of any wrongdoing**. He ascribed 赋予 righteousness to the Lord. But the Jews were ashamed - both Judah and Israel. Israel was already **been** captured in 722BC and dispersed far throughout the world and **felt abandoned**. They had intermarried with wicked nations so God put them in the midst of those nations to be stripped 剥夺 of everything they owned. Judah, who was closer to Daniel's heart and more recently sent into captivity, **felt ashamed**. Judah was weakened, sickened, and **exposed to the elements of Satan because of her compromises** 妥协. Jeremiah's words expressed this same sentiment.

Lamentations 1:18 "The LORD is righteous, For I rebelled against His commandment. Hear now, all peoples, And behold my sorrow; My virgins and my young men Have gone into captivity.

Look at what Israel was promised, and look at where they ended up.

Deut 26:19 "and that He will set you high above all nations which He has made, in praise, in name, and in honor, and that you may be a holy people to the LORD your God, just as He has spoken."
To Daniel's day there was no greater fall in history历史 But at least they were making confession.

8 "O Lord, to us belongs shame of face, to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, because we have sinned against You.

8. Daniel acknowledged that all had sinned. Sin had infiltrated every rank in Jewish society. If sin were only limited in one area it would be easier to wipe out, but in Daniel's day, there was no place which sin had not captured. I expect that the Jewish captives would have given a collective "amen" to this prayer.

9. I believe it is good that we take the time weekly to confess our sins to the Lord in New Horizon and not make excuses for our sins. I also like the idea of using words. Some churches sing a song of confession but the words can get lost in trying to keep the melody. Other churches have dropped confession of sins all together. But how much we need it!

On what basis does God forgive your sins? God is Merciful

9 "To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against Him.

10 "We have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God, to walk in His laws, which He set before us by His servants the prophets.

1. You must know that God is a God of mercy to his covenant people in order to repent. He is known for mercy. He shows mercy by forgiving the sins of his people through Jesus Christ.

Exodus 34:6 And the LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering 不轻易发怒, and abounding in goodness and truth, **7 "keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity** and transgression and sin, by no means clearing *the guilty*, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation."

What is interesting here is that Daniel begins in Verse 9 with "Lord our God," which is "Adonai our God." In verse 10, he reverts恢复 back to the covenant expressions "LORD our God" – Jehovah our God. He was asking God Almighty全能者 for forgiveness but acknowledging that they had broken Covenant God's law.

2. You must know your sins and how serious they are before God, and you must know of the holiness of God in order to repent. Consider now Nehemiah appealed to God's favor:

Nehemiah 9:17 They refused to obey, And **they were not mindful of Your wonders** That You did among them. But they **hardened their necks**, And in their rebellion They appointed a leader To return to their bondage. **But You are God, Ready to pardon**, Gracious and merciful, Slow to anger, Abundant in kindness, And did not forsake them.

Psalms 62:12 Also to You, O Lord, *belongs* mercy...

You will see 3 more grounds for the prayer of repentance next time.

Conclusion:

Certainly Daniel was hurt that more of the Jews did not seek God's favor early and repent in fasting, sackcloth and ashes. But it is never too late to repent...even of sins of long ago. And so he called on the Jews...and he led from the front...to repent of their sins: personal, ecclesiastical, and national sins. He never blamed God for their troubles. They had made the obstacle for themselves, but they had to go to God to remove it. Then the unstoppable kingdom could advance in earnest.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: **Sin is a reproach 责备 to any people.** God cannot look at sin. Unconfessed sins affect you, your family, your business, your country, **and certainly, the kingdom of God.** It behooves 责无旁贷 you then to search out your life – even from years gone by-individually, look at your congregation and see how we have not been outwardly focused but pursued personal pleasure and profit, and examine ourselves nationally, and see our unconfessed sins...how we are publicly promoting perversion as a proper life style...abusing our little children by brainwashing them in lies. **Then confess those sins.** God promises that if you – his children- call on him through Jesus Christ, he will hear from heaven and forgive your sins and heal your land. **The full price of your sins was carried on Jesus' body.** And when God forgives your sins, **live like the forgiven** – live obediently. Only dogs return to their vomit. Children of God, saved by grace, press on to take dominion for Jesus Christ.

Finally: Remember God's Words of invitation to you: Isaiah 55:7 "Let the wicked forsake his way, And the unrighteous man his thoughts; Let him return to the LORD, And He will have mercy on him; And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon."