

## Crying Out to God in Chaotic Times, Part 2

Daniel 9:10-19

As authorities are investigating the storming of the U.S. Capitol on January 6, one word keeps coming to mind: anarchy. The word refers to an absence of or rejection of authority. We are learning that those who are extreme rightists<sup>i</sup> and extreme leftists<sup>ii</sup> were responsible for the riot. But as Christian believers, we must condemn this vicious show of force against God-ordained authorities. Those who react with violence against extremists only justify extremism and prove that they themselves are extremists. The Lord warned his prophet not to become rebellious like the people to whom he preached (Ezekiel 2:8). Recognizing that violence only begets violence, Jesus commanded his followers not to become violent in the face of fury and treachery (Matthew 26:48-52). No indeed, the true Christian recognizes the Lord's authority by refusing to seek revenge; he knows that the Lord said, "**Vengeance is mine; I will repay**" (Romans 12:19). These anarchists stir up sentiments that could easily destroy our society.

In the last two messages, we have reviewed the words of Jeremiah 4:22-23 as parallels to what is happening in our nation. It is as if our nation is being "unmade" by silly, foolish evil, rejecting the knowledge of the one true God. This past Wednesday evening, we studied the same phenomenon in Genesis 4. After the creation account in Genesis 1-2 and the Fall recorded in Genesis 3, the next chapter reads like the unmaking of what had been made. When you read through Genesis 4 carefully, you are tempted to exclaim, "What a mess!" And yet those events – which read like a "de-creation" – occurred within a few decades of the Creation. Is it any wonder that Genesis chapter 4 concludes with the words, "**then began men to call upon the name of the LORD!**" Like the needle on a compass, that phrase points us to the only real source of hope in our own day as well. Like these saints of old, we can cry out to God in these chaotic times.

### Taking personal responsibility leads to a prayerful response

"Crying out to God" typifies Daniel's prayer in chapter 9. Knowing that his people were in a mess, he called upon the name of the Lord. Daniel confessed the bright glory of the great and awesome God<sup>iii</sup> and the darkness of man's wicked sin.<sup>iv</sup> When Isaiah saw God's holiness, he confessed that he was a man of filthy speech in the midst of a society filled with filthy speech (Isaiah 6:1-4). The prophet could clearly see man's transgression and iniquity when he understood God's transcendent glory. Daniel took a similar approach in his prayer. In verses 3-4, he wrote, "I turned my face," "I prayed..." but look at the pronouns he used beginning in verses 5-6: "**We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments:** <sup>6</sup> **Neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets, which spoke in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land.**" Daniel used the words "we," "our," and "us" in a similar way in verses 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16 to take personal responsibility for wickedness and its consequences. Daniel shows us that he has the heart of an intercessor who enters into the difficulties of his people. His was a self-examining, self-indicting prayer. Daniel did not declare his own righteousness in contrast to the wickedness of the people of Israel. In the first place, he knew that, in truth, he was also a sinner. But also as a faithful intercessor, he identified with his people, sins and all. It has been said that the first step to solving a problem is describing it accurately. Daniel

clearly and accurately stated the sins of his nation and “owned” those sins using those personal pronouns.

But it’s also important to notice the personal words that Daniel used when appealing to God. For instance, note the use of the word “our” in verses 14-15, **“Therefore hath the LORD watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us: for the LORD our God is righteous in all his works which he doeth: for we obeyed not his voice. And now, O Lord our God, that hast brought thy people forth out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and hast gotten thee renown, as at this day; we have sinned, we have done wickedly.”** Just as surely as Daniel testified about “our” sin, he also confessed that the Lord is “our” God! Glorifying God and confessing national sin, Daniel cried out to God in those chaotic times.

### **Taking leadership leads to a prayerful response**

We could look at the way Daniel prayed as that of a trailblazer or a pathfinder. Four words come to mind to describe this prayer: prophetic, application, typology and historical. As a pattern, Daniel the prophet led his people by example. Like a prophet, he declared their sins, but he also showed them how to repent by identifying with his people. His application – the way he applied himself to prayer – shows us that he was determined to stand in the gap (Ezekiel 22:30). Like him, we could be godly intercessory to pray for our world, our country, our region, our state, our country, our community, our church and our family. In fact, doing so would be to picture Christ to this world. Daniel’s prayer was (in a sense) a type of Christ’s prayer. Jesus, who was sinless, became a human being, and taught people to repent; He began his public ministry with the words, **“Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!”** (Matthew 4:17). But 2 Corinthians 5:21 explains, **“For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.”** Jesus “self-identified” with us as sinners in order that He could strike the death blow against sin and death and deliver us. But Daniel’s prayer did not avoid the historical issue: Israel had a history of sinning against the glorious God and Daniel confessed this plainly. His prayer was like that of a trailblazer or pathfinder to help Israel find the way home. And Zechariah 12:10 prophesies that a revival is coming among the people of Israel: **“And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, The spirit of grace and of supplications: And they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, And they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for his only son, And shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.”** Think of what that revival will be like! They will look upon the One whom they have pierced and mourn, for they will realize that He suffered at their hands to pay for their sins.

Those Who Pierced Me Shall Behold Me

(Zechariah 12:10; 13:1-2; Acts 3:25-26; John 19:30)

*When the Lord pours out His Spirit, precious promise of His grace*

*Then His people shall behold Him and His welcoming embrace*

*Then the blessed house of David shall cry out and humbly pray*

*And a fountain for their cleansing shall be opened in that day*

*Those who pierced Me shall behold Me, mourning over all their sin*

*As Messiah, they shall know Me as the Savior for all men.*

*From His side flowed blood and water and they pierced His hands and feet*

*As the Lamb went to the slaughter my sin’s payment was complete.*

*Precious Fountain, Son of David, gave His righteous life for me*

*For He paid, and I was pardoned! It was finished on that tree.*

*Oh the blessing of the Fountain that will cleanse my soul from sin!  
For His death and resurrection are the blessings for all men  
Blessed promise to His people, Abraham's own righteous Seed,  
Blessing all who trust His power turning them from wicked deeds  
To the blessed Son of David sacrificed for even me  
I will offer up my praises to the One who set me free  
Praise the Lamb! The Son of David! Idols must be put away,  
What a precious flowing Fountain! They shall see Him in that day.*

Yet even today, we can pray for our Lord to pour out His Holy Spirit of grace and supplication to revive us. In doing so, we take leadership by a prayerful response. We can cry out to God in these chaotic times. Think about the way that Daniel, the pathfinder, showed us how to pray.

**Truthfulness: God has given us His Truth, but we have transgressed against it. vs. 10-11**

**Neither have we obeyed the voice of the LORD our God, to walk in his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets. Yea, all Israel have transgressed thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy 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.”** Our glorious God communicated His truth to us clearly. But we have trespassed against Him and departed from His words. Isn't this exactly what is happening in our nation right now? We have turned our backs on God and His Word. We have trespassed against His clear teaching about the lives of children in their mothers' wombs – and become a casually murderous society. This week our new president accused his political adversaries of being like Nazi Joseph Goebbels who propagated “the Big Lie” in World War II.<sup>v</sup> To Mr. Biden, we would respectfully respond that “the Big Lie” in our days is referring to casually murderous abortion as “health care.”<sup>vi</sup>

**Credibility: God says what He means and means what He says. v. 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.”**

In verse 12, Daniel called his people to bear witness about their national history. He held up Israel and Jerusalem as the preeminent example of God's integrity. In essence, the prophet was showing us that God says what He means and means what He says. If God chastened His own chosen people this way, then where does that leave the pagan nations of this world? It leaves us standing in the need of prayer, confession and national repentance.

**Faithfulness: God hears the cry of His people in chaotic times. 13-19**

Verses 13-14 may be the most tragic of all the verses in this prayer: **“As it is written in the Law of Moses, all this evil [all this disaster] has 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. Therefore has the Lord watched upon the evil [kept the calamity ready] and brought it upon us ...”**

Daniel was desperate for answers. Are you desperate yet? Daniel lamented that even under the mounting pressure of the consequences of national sin, they had not turned to the Lord in prayer. Now

take this personally. Daniel said, “we made not our prayer,” but each of us could say, “I have not made my prayer to the Lord.” This is especially tragic when there is so much at stake for our people, our children and our grandchildren. But as a trailblazer, Daniel made it clear: two of the purposes for prayer were 1. That they might turn from their iniquities and 2. That they might understand God’s truth. Now it would be easy for each of us to say, “Well, I’m not as bad as others!” Or, “I haven’t been perverse like others.” Yet this brand of self-righteousness will not win the ear of God. James 4:17 reminds us, “to him who knows to do good and does it not, to him it is sin.” We have sinned against the Lord by failing to pray for this nation. Because of our prayerlessness, our society is crumbling into lawlessness. It’s time to pray. Because God is faithful, we know that He will hear the appeals of humble, repentant people. So rather than protest against the perversity of others, let’s pray. Let’s pray that God would turn our nation away from its iniquities and open our ears to God’s Truth.

According to verse 14, God is righteous and He has revealed His ways to us. According to verse 15, He has rescued His people in the past. The historical reminder in verse 15 is especially important. In these days, do you sometimes feel like a captive in a foreign land? Then let us ask a question. When did the Lord set His people free from the land of Egypt? The Lord sent Moses as a messenger of God’s deliverance when He heard the desperate cry of His people (Exodus 3:7, 9; 4:31). Those Israelites were desperate enough to seek the Lord in prayer. Are you and I that desperate yet? Daniel prayed earnestly that the faithful God would turn His fury away from their nation. As the prophet wrote, he did not make his appeal on the basis of any personal righteousness but on the basis of God’s great mercies.

#### Applications

- When you see the state of our nation, are you desperate yet?
- There are many indications that those who hate God are pressuring the new administration of our country to carry out evil designs. Wouldn’t now be the right time to pray and to ask the Lord to turn us from our iniquities and to help us understand God’s Truth?
- Would you be willing to spend 30 minutes of your day to pray for genuine revival in your nation, your state, your county, your church and your family?
- Let us follow Daniel, the trailblazer and the pathfinder. Let us cry out to God in these chaotic times.

*Pastor Gordon Dickson, Calvary Baptist Church, Findlay, Ohio 45840 [www.cbcbfindlay.org](http://www.cbcbfindlay.org)*

---

<sup>i</sup> An anonymous person who calls himself “Q” has posted messages in controversial online chat forums. Purportedly, these are pro-Trump messages that rail against a secret international, political faction. See Gino Spocchia, “What Role did QAnon play in the Capitol riot?” The UK Independent, 01/10/21 accessed at

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/us-election-2020/qanon-capitol-congress-riot-trump-b1784460.html>

<sup>ii</sup> Jerry Dunleavy, “Black Lives Matter activist charged for participation in storming of Capitol,” Washington Examiner, January 14, 2021 accessed at <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/news/blm-activist-charged-participation-storming-capitol>

<sup>iii</sup> See “Crying Out to God in Chaotic Times,” (part 1), a Theology of Daniel’s Prayer, accessed at <https://www.cbcbfindlay.org/crying-out-to-god-in-chaotic-times/>

<sup>iv</sup> Our Wickedness and God’s Word, accessed at <https://www.sermonaudio.com/sermoninfo.asp?SID=11121172035228>

<sup>v</sup> See Peter Lucas, “Biden bombs when comparing Trump to Nazi official” The Boston Herald, January 16, 2021 accessed at <https://www.bostonherald.com/2021/01/16/biden-bombs-when-comparing-trump-to-nazi-official/>

<sup>vi</sup> Abigail Abrams, “Planned Parenthood Chief: Joe Biden Should Sign A 'Day One' Executive Order to Protect Abortion” Time, December 30, 2020 accessed at <https://time.com/5921939/planned-parenthood-alexis-mcgill-johnson/>