

# PRAYING IN THE SPIRIT PART FIVE PRAYING LIKE BUSY DANIEL

In God's opinion of History, the Kingdom of Babylon was the richest and most glorious of all. Babylon was the head of gold in the image God revealed to NEBUCHADNEZZAR. As Nebuchadnezar's realm spread across the then known world, it left in its wake the dust of crushed opponents foolish enough to challenge God's chosen instrument of judgment. To the helm of that incredible Empire rose an incredible young man of God -- Daniel.

Daniel we know as a great man of God. He was in the Word of God. He was also a man of unusual power in prayer. But have you ever considered what it must have been like for Daniel to maintain such a godly life while he was also Prime Minister to the greatest empire in the world? Do you feel overwhelmed with life this morning? Do you sometimes feel your are working at your max and just can't seem to find time to fit in devotional seeking of the Lord/ Are you so busy your spiritual life is suffering? Then it is time to take some lessons. I call this praying like busy Daniel!

Daniel's life consisted of:

- ✓ untold streams of decisions, meetings, and conferences,
- ✓ there were banquets and clay tablet work (Like our paper work),
- ✓ he must have endured holdups on the freeways in his chariot as well as all the everyday needs of life.
- ✓ Life for Daniel was a swirl of going to the sandal shop, stopping at the repair shop to have new wheels put on the chariot and caring for the needs of the horses ...

What I'm saying is, Daniel was a very responsible man, committed and most of all BUSY! How did he cope with life at the top? How did he keep from burnout? How did he face all the stress of the ultramodern global business concerns that came to him from the 120 provinces from the Mediterranean to India, from the southern parts of Russia to the Persian Gulf?

Listen carefully, here was his big secret: He knelt on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks to his God -- AS HE ALWAYS DID!

In the midst of his cabinet position in a worldwide empire and all the pressures that came with such a position, DANIEL FAITHFULLY PRAYED. Not just at a meal, no, he found a way to stop it all, go to a quiet, private chamber, KNEEL and come into the presence of God in thanksgiving.

The Lord has laid out a way for us to stay in powerful touch with Him. God calls it Praying in the Spirit. This morning we are in 5<sup>th</sup> part of our series: Praying in the Spirit.

What is praying in the Spirit? It is no less than praying LIKE DANIEL did!

Please join me as we read about one of God's greatest praying servants in the Bible, Daniel 6:1-11.

1. DANIEL'S PRAYERS MODEL SEEKING GOD WITH ALL OUR HEARTS

- ✓ Daniel 1:8 But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank; therefore he requested of the chief of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.
- ✓ Jeremiah 29:12-13 Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you.13 And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.
- ✓ Think for a moment about that. For Daniel his decision meant he would endanger his path up the ladder of Babylon, he would have to break with the crowd, he would lose friends, and he would be lonely at times.
- ✓ What does Seeking God with all our hearts mean today? How about deciding to read God's Word and pray before e-mail and Internet? How about deciding today to pack your Bible into your backpack, briefcase or pickup and plan to open it at lunch, or instead of listening to the EIB network, or whatever? How about planning to dress like a godly Christian at school and at work instead of in style (which means in step with) the worldlings? Think about it. It may cost friends, fun and future advancements on earth. But it makes for a great friendship with God. Which is more important?

2. DANIEL'S PRAYERS MODEL FOLLOWING GOD'S WILL

- ✓ Daniel 4:17 'This decision is by the decree of the watchers, And the sentence by the word of the holy ones, In order that the living may know That the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, Gives it to whomever He will, And sets over it the lowest of men.'
  - ✓ 1 John 5:14 Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.
3. DANIEL'S PRAYERS MODEL YEILDING TO THE HOLY SPIRIT
- ✓ Zechariah 4:6 So he answered and said to me: "This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' Says the Lord of hosts.
  - ✓ Daniel 4:18 "This dream I, King Nebuchadnezzar, have seen. Now you, Belteshazzar, declare its interpretation, since all the wise men of my kingdom are not able to make known to me the interpretation; but you are able, for the Spirit of the Holy God is in you."
  - ✓ The price for knowing that you are walking in the Spirit is yieldedness. Jesus said in John 14:21 He that hath my commandments and keepeth them! How do we do that? It is when we yield to the Law of God written on our hearts.
  - ✓ Acts 5:32 "And we are His witnesses to these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him."
  - ✓ 1 John 3:22 And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.
4. DANIEL'S PRAYERS MODEL LIVING IN HUMILITY (THE EMPTINESS OF SELF AND FULLNESS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT)
- ✓ Daniel 5:14-17 "I have heard of you, that the Spirit of God is in you, and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom are found in you.15 "Now the wise men, the astrologers, have been brought in before me, that they should read this writing and make known to me its interpretation, but they could not give the interpretation of the thing.16 "And I have heard of you, that you can give interpretations and explain enigmas. Now if you can read the writing and make known to me its interpretation, you shall be clothed with purple and have a chain of gold around your neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom." 17 Then Daniel answered, and said before the king, "Let your gifts be for yourself, and give your rewards to another; yet I will read the writing to the king, and make known to him the interpretation.
  - ✓ Ephesians 5:18 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,
  - ✓ 2 Chronicles 7:14 "if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their

wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land

5. DANIEL'S PRAYERS MODEL ABHORRING SIN (THAT GRIEVES THE HOLY SPIRIT)
  - ✓ Daniel 5:22-23 "But you his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, although you knew all this.23 "And you have lifted yourself up against the Lord of heaven. They have brought the vessels of His house before you, and you and your lords, your wives and your concubines, have drunk wine from them. And you have praised the gods of silver and gold, bronze and iron, wood and stone, which do not see or hear or know; and the God, who holds your breath in His hand and owns all your ways, you have not glorified.
  - ✓ Ephesians 4:30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.
6. DANIEL'S PRAYERS MODEL DEPENDING UPON THE GUIDANCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
  - ✓ Daniel 6:10 Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days.
  - ✓ Romans 8:26-27 Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.27 Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.
7. DANIEL'S PRAYERS MODEL CHOOSING TO BE FULL OF GOD'S WORD
  - ✓ Daniel 9:1-10 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 of Jerusalem. 3 Then I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.4 And I prayed to the Lord my God, and made confession, and said, "O Lord, great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him, and with those who keep His commandments,5 "we have sinned and committed iniquity, we have done wickedly and rebelled, even by departing from Your precepts and Your judgments.6 "Neither have we heeded 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.<sup>7</sup> "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.<sup>8</sup> "O Lord, to us belongs shame of face, to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, because we have sinned against You.<sup>9</sup> "To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against Him.<sup>10</sup> "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.

- ✓ Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

### "THE HABIT OF GODLINESS"

In 1989 a Mormon named Steven R. Covey wrote a #1 National Best-selling book called, *THE 7 HABITS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE PEOPLE*. Those seven habits were: Be proactive; Begin with the end in mind; Put first things first; Think win-win; Seek first to understand, then be understood; Synergize; Sharpen the saw. Over the past ten years this book has seen phenomenal sales. The title is what attracted me. This morning as a disciple of Jesus Christ, we should each be learning the SEVEN HABITS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE CHRISTIANS.

In the life of a 7th Century BC. teenager named Daniel, who was captured in war, sent off as booty to the winning side, lets learn some of these HABITS. From God's Word, in the book of Daniel lets explore, discover and cultivate these habits.

Daniel's life contained seven ingredients that blended into his powerful and godly life. These are:

- I. MAKE UP YOUR MIND ABOUT OBEYING GOD. Daniel 1:8 But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself. (KJV)
- II. GIVE GOD THE CREDIT, ALWAYS. Daniel 2:19 During the night the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision. Then Daniel praised the God of heaven (NIV)

- III. POINT TO GOD WHEN PEOPLE LOOK TO YOU. Daniel 2:28 "But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days. Your dream, and the visions of your head upon your bed, were these: (NKJV)
- IV. HAVE THE UNSHAKABLE CONVICTION THAT GOD REIGNS. Daniel 2:44 "In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself endure forever. (NIV); Daniel 4:17 ``The decision is announced by messengers, the holy ones declare the verdict, so that the living may know that the Most High is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and gives them to anyone he wishes and sets over them the lowliest of men.' (NIV) DO YOU SEE THIS TRUTH ABOUT EVERYTHING THAT OCCURS?
- V. REFUSE TO FEAR MERE MORTALS. Daniel 4:25 That they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee, till thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will. (KJV)
- VI. GET AND KEEP GODLY CONTENTMENT. Daniel 5:17 Then Daniel answered the king, "You may keep your gifts for yourself and give your rewards to someone else. Nevertheless, I will read the writing for the king and tell him what it means. (NIV) THIS IS A LIBERATING HABIT!
- VII. REMIND YOURSELF WHO OWNS YOUR BREATH. Daniel 5:23 "And you have lifted yourself up against the Lord of heaven. They have brought the vessels of His house before you, and you and your lords, your wives and your concubines, have drunk wine from them. And you have praised the gods of silver and gold, bronze and iron, wood and stone, which do not see or hear or know; and the God who *holds* your breath in His hand and owns all your ways, you have not glorified. (NKJV)

### Spiritual Depth for Busy People

There are five elements or keys to a healthy and growing spiritual life that operate even when we are busy. These are PRAYER THAT IS:

1. Biblical [Daniel 9:1-4]
2. Honest [Daniel 9:5-11]
3. Automatic [Daniel 6:10a]
4. Committed [Daniel 6:10b] "doors open..."
5. Regular [Daniel 6:10c] "as always..."