

# Greatly Beloved

Daniel 9:23

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**FOCAL Read Together Daniel 9:23** At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to show *thee*; for thou *art* greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision.

God doesn't have any favorites, **for there is no respect of persons with God (Romans 2:11)**. The Lord loves all of His children, those who have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ unto salvation. His Blood was shed equally for every sinner. For those who have "**called upon the Name of the Lord Jesus**" we are all equally saved. God's promise is "**whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved**" (Romans 10:13). Every believer is loved of the Lord. **What shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:35-39).**

Every believer in Christ is "**Beloved**" or "**Beloved in the Lord**", or even "**Beloved Brethren**". Do not believe - dear Christian - that there is ever a time when the Lord does not love you. God loves you for Christ's sake. When He sees you He sees the Blood of the Lamb, His Precious Son, shed for you. He cannot nor will not deny those who are His. You are loved of God if you

have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ

God has no *favorites*, but He does have *intimates*. There are those who are not just **beloved**, but **greatly beloved of the Lord**. Daniel was greatly beloved of the Lord.

Daniel was a believer who *pursued* a living and growing relationship with the Lord. He didn't just follow God, he *chased after God*. Though Daniel's Israel was dispersed and he himself carried away into exile, Daniel kept his eyes on the Lord. Though his Babylonian captors changed his name to **Belteshazzar**, they could not change his heart. Daniel's heart was fixed on loving the Lord. He *refused to eat of the king's table*, not because he was belligerent, but because he wanted to glorify the Lord in his life (**Daniel 1:8**). He refused to do anything that might offend the Lord Who saved him.

**Psalms 57:5-7** Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens; *let thy glory be above all the earth.* [6] They have prepared a net for my steps; my soul is bowed down: they have digged a pit before me, into the midst whereof they are fallen *themselves*. Selah. [7] **My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise.**

God spoke to Daniel for Daniel spoke to God. He fixed or set his heart on loving and serving his Creator. The Angel of God said to Daniel:

**FOCAL** Daniel 9:23 **At the beginning of thy**

**supplications the commandment came forth ....**

"As soon as you started praying, Daniel, the Lord called me and sent me". When an intimate of God prays and seeks the Lord's face, the Lord always replies. The Bible says:

**Proverbs 15:29** The LORD *is* far from the wicked: but **he heareth the prayer of the righteous.**

**An Intimate Of God Prays Frequently  
Because He Loves The Lord**

Daniel didn't just pray when he needed to send a "911 call" to God. Daniel prayed frequently, at fixed intervals, regardless as to his circumstances.

Many Christians will not begin their day with prayer because they have allowed the cares of the world to overwhelm them. Perhaps they rise too late, and are rushing to get to work. Or else they are too self absorbed, focused on the world around them and not on their Father above. Daniel wasn't this way. He was a praying man. Heaven was his home, and God his Father - and Daniel loved to phone home frequently to talk to his Heavenly Parent.

Jesus told His disciples that:

**John 15:19 ... because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.**

The world will always **hate the Christian**. If you are a child of God by faith in Christ then the ungodly will not like you. Jesus said "**woe unto you, when all men speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets**" (Luke 6:26). If you are a believer living for the Lord then *somebody is going to dislike you*. You're going to rub someone the wrong way.

Daniel had his enemies. These enemies started watching Daniel to see if they could find fault with him. This young man was an exile in Babylonian captivity - surely he would do something treasonous. Yet they watched Daniel day after day and found absolutely no fault in him. So then his enemies got a devilish idea. "Let's play on the King's pride and see if we can't outlaw prayer for about thirty days". These enemies went to the King and asked him to

**Daniel 6:7 ... make a firm decree, that whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions.**

The idea of this excited **King Darius!** If people wanted to pray or had a need to fill they had to come to him for the next thirty days. This was like elevating Darius into godhood status among his people. If anyone else was sought - *even God* - then that person would be fed to the lions. **Darius** quickly signed the decree into law.

Daniel's enemies figured they had won. If Daniel went into hiding to pray then he was exposed as a hypocrite. If

Daniel prayed as he always did then he could be declared a traitor to King Darius, and thrown into the lion's den. Either way - they thought - they were rid of Daniel. Now look at Daniel's response:

**Daniel 6:10-11** Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did formerly. [11] Then these men assembled, and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God.

**Daniel didn't go to the King for a waiver** on prayer. He didn't lodge a complaint, or send an email out about "**Why can't our Prophets pray at home anymore?**" Daniel didn't hide his faith. He **did exactly as he had always done**. He prayed, and trusted the rest to God.

Dear believer, we who love the Lord must not allow the world to dictate our faith. *Prayer has been removed from our schools because we are not teaching our children to pray*. There is no law that says our children cannot pray before a test or before a meal. If we teach our children to pray then prayer will be back in school. We can pray at ball games or other public events, regardless as to what the ACLU might say.

Daniel prayed. He didn't care one way or the other about what others were doing. *He prayed*. He sought God's

guidance **three times a day before King Darius' edict, and would seek the Lord three times a day afterward.** Daniel served the Lord by praying and let the Lord take care of the outcome. Was Daniel thrown into the lion's den? Absolutely! When his enemies saw him praying they ran to Darius and reported him. Daniel was cast into the lion's den for serving the Lord through prayer.

**Charles Stanley** has a picture of "Daniel in the Lion's Den" hanging in his Church. **Vance Havner** saw that picture when he was visiting with Stanley and remarked on it. He said, "**Have you noticed that Daniel isn't looking at the lions - he's looking upward.**"

When Daniel was thrown into the lion's den he never looked at the lions. He looked up. Daniel prayed. He sought the face of God on a regular basis, and God blessed Daniel beyond measure.

### **Daniel's Pattern and Method Of Prayer**

We have a beautiful example of Daniel's method of prayer found in this ninth chapter. Let's look at our context.

**CONTEXT Daniel 9:3** And **I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes:**

**Daniel set his face unto the Lord God** He focused on the Lord. Small children, when they want the undivided attention of the adult, often reach up and pull our faces

down to focus on them. Daniel did this with the Lord. He looked up to the Lord and, *with the hands of faith*, pulled God's face down to his. "**Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth**". When we pray we should be focused on the **face of the Lord**. Too often we go to God in prayer with a list of things that we want. The Lord loves us, and wants us to love Him back. The Lord often walked with Adam **in the cool of the evening**, communing with the man that He created. The Lord loves you. He made you, and gave Himself for you. Prayer shouldn't always be about what we want from God. It shouldn't always be a list of things needed.

**Psalms 142:4-5** I looked on *my* right hand, and beheld, but *there was* no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul. [5] I cried unto thee, O LORD: I said, Thou *art* my refuge and my portion in the land of the living.

Seek God's Face, not His Hand. Get to know God as you pray.

God loves you - He cares for you. He saved you by shedding His Blood on that terrible tree of Calvary. Oh that His children would love Him back! Look upon God's face, not on His hands. **The Lord is your portion and your refuge.** He is everything to His saints.

**CONTEXT Daniel 9:3** And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes:

**Daniel humbled himself before the Lord God** Daniel practiced **fasting**, and used **sackcloth and ashes**. The ancient Jew would often strip himself of his normal pleasures in order to lower himself before the Lord. Though we may not fast, or dress ourselves in sackcloth and ashes, we are not to go before the Lord arrogantly. The Scripture says:

**James 4:10** **Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.**

We cannot go to God with a list of demands. He is God, and we are not.

If you want to be **lifted up** by God, then **first lower yourself**.

Bend the knee to God, and give Him the honor that is His due. Remember that

**1 Peter 5:5-6** ... **God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. [6] Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:**

**ILLUSTRATE** Those who humble themselves will be lifted up, but those who exalt themselves shall be humbled! I heard the story once of a little boy who kept running around the house. His mother told him over and over again, "Sit down", but he refused to obey. Finally the mother put a chair in the corner and made the little boy sit down. Looking at his mother he said, "I may be

sitting down on the outside, but I'm standing up on the inside".

Every believer needs to humble himself from the *inside out* when he prays to the Lord.

**Psalms 100:3** **Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.**

God is the Creator and the Great Shepherd. Humble yourselves before Him.

**Daniel 9:4-5** **And I prayed unto the LORD my God, and made my confession, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments; [5] We have sinned ....**

**Daniel Justified God** What do I mean by that? The word "justified" means "to declare righteous". What Daniel did was go to the Lord and *acknowledge that the predicament Israel was in was because of Israel, not because of God*. God is righteous, holy, and just. Daniel affirmed this. He literally was saying, "**God, you are right, and we are wrong**".

**ILLUSTRATE** I saw a cartoon one time that had a man sitting in a boat in the middle of the ocean. The boat was leaking, and round about the boat sharks were circling. The man cried out to God, "**Lord, what have I done to deserve this?**" In the last panel of the cartoon you see the words coming from Heaven, "**Do you want a list?**"

**1 Corinthians 1:9** **God is faithful**, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

God is always faithful, but we are not. Rather than curse God for the trial or the situation we find ourselves in we need to follow the pattern of Job. Job lost everything. He lost his property, his children, and most of his friends. Yet when his wife told him:

**Job 2:9** .... **Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die.**

Job replied,

**Job 2:10** .... **Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? ...**

When we can't understand what is happening to us, and the very hand of God seems turned against us, *trust the heart of God.*

God is faithful. He is faithful in the trial, just as He is faithful apart from the trial:

**1 Corinthians 10:13** There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but **God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.**

**Daniel confessed not only his sins, but his nation's sins** Daniel *repented* or confessed his *specific sins* and the *specific sins* of the nation Israel. He prayed:

**CONTEXT Daniel 9:5-6** **We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments: [6] 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 knew that Israel was in Babylonian captivity because Israel had rejected the Lord their God. In the same way today America is in bondage to sin because God's people nationwide have not stood up for the Lord's Word. There are good Christian people who have elected people who are pro-abortion and pro-sexual sin. Many Christians - who should be living their lives as **kings and priests unto God** - have taken the easier road of worldliness rather than the righteous walk in the Spirit. **Wilbur Rees** wrote a poem called "**Three Dollars Worth of God**". In that poem he wrote:

**"I would like to buy 3\$ worth of God, please. Not enough to explode my soul or disturb my sleep, but just enough to equal a cup of warm milk or a snooze in the sunshine. I don't want enough of God to make me love a black man or pick beets with a migrant. I want ecstasy, not transformation. I want warmth of the womb, not new birth. I want a pound of the Eternal in a paper sack. I would like to buy 3\$ worth**

of God, please." from Voice of the Martyrs Magazine, Aug 2009

**We need more than 3\$ worth of God!** God has been faithful to us in America for many, many years, but over the last 50 years we have become increasingly faithless.

**Daniel 9:8** O Lord, to us *belongeth* confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee.

**To us belongs confusion of face.** There is no confusion in God, only peace and joy, and love in the Holy Ghost. We as a people have **sinned against the Lord Who loves us.** We must confess that sin. God told His people long ago:

**2 Chronicles 7:13-14** If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people; [14] **If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.**

This is the prayer that Daniel prayed. He **humbled himself in sackcloth and ashes.** He **prayed** whether it was convenient or not. He **sought God's face,** not His hand. He came to God as a child would come to a parent. Daniel knew that **the wicked would not repent, so he confessed the national sins before God.** Peter Marshal, the great Washington Pastor, prayed:

**"Lord Jesus, we come to Thee now as little children. Dress us again in clean pinafores; make us tidy once more with the tidiness of true remorse and confession. Oh, wash our hearts, that we may be clean again. Make us to know the strengthening joys of the Spirit, and the newness of life which only Thou can give."**

Daniel confessed both his and his neighbor's sins. He was specific. Then he prayed:

**Daniel 9:9** **To the Lord our God *belong* mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him;**

Daniel did not ask for **justice,** but for **mercy and forgiveness.** As King David said:

**Psalms 86:5-7** For **thou, Lord, *art* good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee.** [6] Give ear, O LORD, unto my prayer; and attend to the voice of my supplications. [7] In the day of my trouble I will call upon thee: for thou wilt answer me.

God is always ready to forgive. He is to His people **an ocean of mercy, and a fount of forgiveness.** It is said that on Calvary He paid a debt He did not owe for a people who could not pay.

God loves us, and gave Himself for us. He will always forgive His people, and always save whosoever will - if they but call on His Name! Daniel was quite plain when he prayed. He said:

**Daniel 9:18** 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.**

Daniel was clear that **he understood that God's mercy was undeserved.** Sometimes we go to God expecting a thing because we think *we are worth it*. Daniel had the right perspective. He said, "Lord, I know we've not been righteous, I know we're getting what we deserve. But Lord, I appeal not to Your justice *but Your mercy*". Finally,

**Daniel prayed for the Glory of God** When Israel rebelled against God in the wilderness the Lord came to Moses and said,

**Exodus 32:9-10** .... **I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people: [10] Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation.**

God told Moses "just let Me wipe out these Israelites, and I'll use your progeny to make a great nation". When the Lord said this Moses went to Him in prayer, saying:

**Exodus 32:11-12** .... **LORD, why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power, and with a**

**mighty hand? [12] Wherefore should the Egyptians speak, and say, For mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth? Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people.**

Moses prayed for the people, asking that God **glorify Himself** by continuing to protect Israel. Daniel did the same thing when he prayed. He told the Lord:

**CONTEXT Daniel 9:19** **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.**

"For Thine own sake, Lord, hear and forgive Your people". Do this for Your glory, Lord, so that the world can see that there is but One God.

When we pray, we should pray that God's glory be manifested in the answer to our prayer. Jesus taught His disciples to pray that God might be glorified. A golden prayer that will always be answered is "Father, glorify Your Name".

**ILLUSTRATE** Everyone can pray, regardless of their age. There were four aging ladies enjoying a cup of coffee and a little fellowship when they began to *compare miseries*. One lady said, "My arms are so weak that I can barely get my cup of coffee to my lips". Another lady said, "My arms are fine, but my legs are so weak I can barely walk over to the coffee pot". A third lady said, "My eyes are so weak that I often make a mess

when I'm filling up my coffee cup". The fourth lady said, "Yes, I know we're all in pretty bad shape. But at least we can still drive!"

I'm not sure any of those precious ladies needed to be driving, but no matter what our state of being we can still pray. When God's people pray, we bring glory to our Lord. When God's people pray we act as **kings and priests unto God**. Show me a troublemaker in the Church and I'll show you a person who does not pray. When we pray and intercede for one another we find love growing in our hearts for both the one we are praying for and the One Who hears prayer. When we lift one another up to the Throne of Grace God moves, saving the lost, and blessing the saved.

Live your life as one who is **shipwrecked on God, and stranded on His omnipotence**. Pray, and seek God's face. Pray for the lost. If there are lost that you know, lift them up to God in prayer today. Prayer - true Daniel like prayer - will **help you understand the matter, and consider the vision**.

May God touch your hearts with His Word.



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