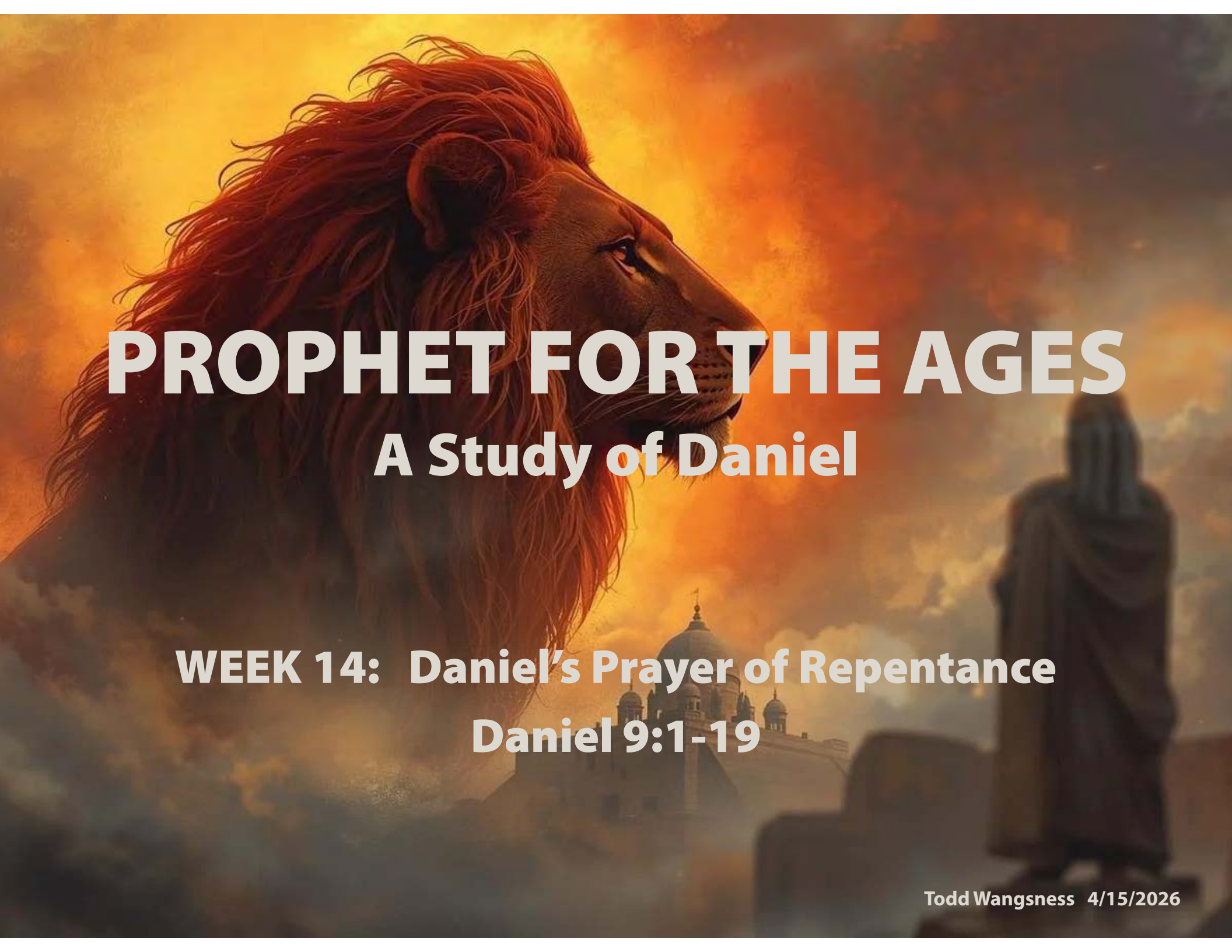




PROPHET FOR THE AGES

A Study of Daniel

WEEK 14: Daniel's Prayer of Repentance
Daniel 9:1-19

Prophet for the Ages: Daniel's Prayer of Repentance

Daniel 9:1-19 Overview

- Daniel, now an elderly man (probably in his 80s), had been studying “the books”, specifically the prophecies of Jeremiah. He understood that Jeremiah had foretold seventy years of desolation for Jerusalem and the Babylonian exile (*Jeremiah 25:11-12; 29:10*). With the Persian conquest and the nearing end of those seventy years, Daniel realized the time for restoration might be at hand. This biblical insight prompted his fervent prayer.
- The prayer divides into three main parts and is notable for its corporate nature, Daniel repeatedly uses “we,” “us,” and “our,” fully identifying himself with Israel’s sins even though he personally lived righteously.

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|-----------------------------------|--------------|---|
| 1. Praise of God’s Character | verse 4 | A doration |
| 2. Corporate Confession of Sin | verses 5-14 | C onfession / T hanksgiving |
| 3. Plea for Mercy and Restoration | verses 15-19 | S upplication |

- Or A-C-T-S!

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Daniel 9:1-19 Major Themes

Corporate Confession of Sin (Deep Repentance)

- The dominant portion of the prayer (verses 5–14) is an honest, detailed confession. Daniel repeatedly uses “we,” “us,” and “our,” fully identifying with Israel’s failures even though he personally lived faithfully.

God’s Righteousness and Justice

- Daniel repeatedly affirms that God is righteous in everything He has done (vv. 7, 14). The exile, destruction of Jerusalem, and scattering of the people are not unfair; they are the just consequence of persistent disobedience.

God’s Mercy, Forgiveness, and Covenant Faithfulness

- The prayer never claims Israel deserves restoration because of its own righteousness (v. 18 explicitly denies this). Instead, he pleads for mercy “for your own sake,” because Jerusalem and the people are called by God’s name.

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Notable Quotes About Daniel 9:1-19

"Prayer is an expression of what we know of God and ourselves. In public we may successfully disguise the truth about ourselves but not in private prayer. Daniel sees the righteousness of God both as the basis for God's judgment of the people (v. 7, 14) and as the ground of his appeal for mercy (v. 16). He does not appeal to any merit in Israel, but solely to the character of God himself: his mercy, his forgiveness, his past acts of deliverance (such as the Exodus), and above all, for the sake of his own name, because Jerusalem and his people are called by it."

■ Sinclair Ferguson

"Daniel informs us how ardently he was accustomed to pray when the time of redemption, specified by Jeremiah, drew nigh. He set his face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes. The greatest part of this prayer is an entreaty that God would pardon his people. God's promises are intended not to supersede, but to encourage and excite our prayers. Nothing, therefore, can be better for us, than to ask for what he has promised."

■ John Calvin

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Daniel Studies Jeremiah and the 70 Years of Desolation

Dan 9:1-3 *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.*

- “Ahasuerus”: May be a title as it was also used of Xerxes
- Daniel knew from his studies in Jeremiah, that the *70 years in the desolations of Jerusalem* were coming to a close (ref [Jer 25:10-14; 29:10-14](#))
- He may have believed (and hoped) that the prophesied Messianic Kingdom would come on the heels of the Babylonian Captivity
- Gabriel was likely sent to correct Daniel's understanding
 - In a play on words, Gabriel informed Daniel that it was not going to be 70 years, but 70 sevens of years before the Messianic Kingdom would be established
- Approximately 67 years had passed since the 1st wave of Babylonian captivity began in 605 BC

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- Daniel correctly understood the Babylonian captivity would last 70 years and those years were soon to expire
- Throughout chapter 9, Daniel acted as though the Messianic Kingdom would soon be established
- As the fulfillment of God's Word is contingent upon prayer, Daniel began to pray
 - *Jer 29:12-14 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. 14 I will be found by you, says the LORD, and I will bring you back from your captivity; I will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you, says the LORD, and I will bring you to the place from which I cause you to be carried away captive.*
- The confession of national sin is a prerequisite for the establishment of the kingdom (ref *Lev 26:40-42; Jer 3:11-18; Hos 5:15*)
- He confessed national sin in verses 3-14 and pleaded for mercy in verses 15-18
- Similarly, we should pray for God to bring nation of Israel to a saving faith and also pray for the persecuted church
 - *Ref Rom 11:23-24 and Isa 63:9*

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Praise of God's Character

Dan 9:4 *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.*

- This is the first time that Daniel invoked God's most Holy Name, YHWH (LORD)
- He described YHWH as the *great and awesome God who keeps His covenant*
- YHWH is also a God of *mercy* (Hebrew: '*chesed*'. *Lovingkindness, favor, goodness, devotion*)
- Moses said that YHWH is a God who keeps His covenants and acts with lovingkindness!
 - *Deu 7:9 "Therefore know that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments."*
- Jesus made the same statement:
 - *John 14:15 If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.*
- When we pray, we – like Daniel – should remember to whom we're praying!
 - He is the Great I Am, the Author and Sustainer of life!

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Daniel's Confession of Corporate Sin

Dan 9:5-7 *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. 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.*

- Daniel confessed Israel was guilty of widespread disobedience to the law of God
 - He confessed that all had *sinned* (*chata* – missed the mark)
 - All had *committed iniquity* (*avah* – to amiss, bend or twist)
 - They had *done wickedly* (*rasha* – to be or act wickedly)
 - They had all *rebelled* (*marad* – deviated from the law)
 - They *committed unfaithfulness* (*maal* – unfaithful and treacherous acts)

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Dan 9:8-10

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

- Daniel acknowledged that the humiliation extended to all ranks of society
 - All levels from kings, princes, and the general population all had missed the mark of the standard of God's righteousness
- Daniel reminds God of His divine attributes of mercy and forgiveness
 - *Isa 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.*
 - *"abundantly":* Heb 'raba'. Exceedingly, beyond any reasonable extent.
 - God alone is our Hope! He alone can grant us *mercy and forgiveness!*
- Daniel again confesses Israel has not obeyed God's laws nor the prophets He sent

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Dan 9:11-12 *Yes, all Israel has transgressed Your law, and has departed so as not to obey Your voice; therefore the curse and the oath written in the Law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out on us, because we have sinned against Him. 12 And He has confirmed His words, which He spoke against us and against our judges who judged us, by bringing upon us a great disaster; for under the whole heaven such has never been done as what has been done to Jerusalem.*

- Daniel summarizes the areas Israel had sinned against the Holy God
- He acknowledges that they are under the curses of the Law written in Moses
 - Ref *Deu 28:15-68*
 - God's faithfulness even extends to His anger! He will *faithfully* follow through on His righteous indignation. He WILL punish the evil-doers that don't repent!
- Israel said that they would keep God's Laws ... they exceedingly failed to do so
 - *Exo 24:7* Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read in the hearing of the people. And they said, "All that the LORD has said we will do, and be obedient."

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Dan 9:13-14 *“As it is written in the Law of Moses, all this disaster has come upon us; yet we have not made our prayer before the LORD our God, that we might turn from our iniquities and understand Your truth. 14 Therefore the LORD has kept the disaster in mind, and brought it upon us; for the LORD our God is righteous in all the works which He does, though we have not obeyed His voice.*

- Daniel acknowledges, that – in spite of Israel's grievous national sins – Israel, collectively, did not return in prayers of repentance to God
- Note Daniel's use of *we / us / our*
 - He is identifying with all of Israel and not excluding himself
- They did not seek the face of the LORD that *we might turn from our iniquities and understand Your truth*
- Daniel states that God was righteous in bringing the horrific disaster of captivity and desolation upon the Jews ... because they *had not obeyed His voice*
- What good would it have done for Israel to return to their land if they continued in a state of rebellion and had not repented?

Prophet for the Ages: Daniel's Prayer of Repentance

Plea for Mercy and Restoration

Dan 9:15 *And now, O Lord our God, who brought Your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and made Yourself a name, as it is this day—we have sinned, we have done wickedly!”*

- Daniel refers to God as Adonai Eloheinu, Lord our God
 - The same God who brought *Israel out of the land of Egypt*
 - God made Himself a Name through delivering Israel from Egypt with mighty miracles
 - *Neh 9:9-10 “You saw the affliction of our fathers in Egypt, And heard their cry by the Red Sea. 10 You showed signs and wonders against Pharaoh, Against all his servants, And against all the people of his land. For You knew that they acted proudly against them. So You made a name for Yourself, as it is this day.*
 - He was very willing to sacrifice His Name and allow a pagan king to take His people captive to a foreign land
- Daniel was appealing to the God of the Exodus – who brought His people out of a foreign country and into their own land, in spite of Israel's grievous sins and wickedness

Prophet for the Ages: Daniel's Prayer of Repentance

Dan 9:16-17 *"O Lord, according to all Your righteousness, I pray, let Your anger and Your fury be turned away from Your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain; because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people are a reproach to all those around us. 17 Now therefore, our God, hear the prayer of Your servant, and his supplications, and for the Lord's sake cause Your face to shine on Your sanctuary, which is desolate."*

- Daniel appeals to God's Righteousness again to honor the covenants to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to let His anger and fury to be *turned away*
 - The punishment of the Jews had become a *reproach to all those around us*
 - This reproach would affect God's reputation in the eyes of the Gentile nations
- Daniel was pleading with God to let His face *shine on Your sanctuary, which is desolate*
- Daniel was asking God to permit the Jews to rebuild the temple
- He appealed to the covenant-keeping God and asked Him on the basis of His Love and Mercy to remember His promises
- Do we pray the same passion as Daniel? *"Lord may your Name be glorified as You restore my marriage or business, or convert my wayward child, etc."*

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Dan 9:18-19 *O my God, incline Your ear and hear; open Your eyes and see our desolations, and the city which is called by Your name; for we do not present our supplications before You because of our righteous deeds, but because of Your great mercies. 19 O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and act! Do not delay for Your own sake, my God, for Your city and Your people are called by Your name."*

- Daniel pleads with God to see their *desolations* and the *desolations of the city which is called by Your Name (Jerusalem)*
- He was NOT presenting supplications to God on the basis of their *righteous deeds*
- He was appealing to the covenant-keeping God to remember His promises and – on the basis of His loyal love and mercies
- He asked YHWH (emphasized three times) to do five things, reflecting a growing sense of urgency, for His own Name's sake, for Jerusalem, and for His people
 1. He wanted God to *hear*
 2. He wanted God to *forgive*
 3. He wanted God to *listen*
 4. He wanted God to *act*
 5. He wanted God to *not delay*

Prophet for the Ages: Daniel's Prayer of Repentance

Questions To Ponder

- What a powerful prayer! Daniel praises God's faithfulness and righteousness. Daniel prayerfully confesses the Jews' national sin and rebellion against God. He acknowledges that they have broken the Covenant with God and have rightfully 'earned' the curses of breaking the Law as described in Deuteronomy 28.
- Do we – at times – presume on God's grace in our lives?
 - *Deu 30:19-20 I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live; 20 that you may love the LORD your God, that you may obey His voice, and that you may cling to Him, for He is your life and the length of your days; and that you may dwell in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them."*
 - *Gal 6:7-8 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. 8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.*

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Questions To Ponder (cont.)

- Do we occasionally *indulge* ourselves in things of the flesh?
 - *Rom 6:1-3 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? 2 Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? 3 Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?*
- Is it possible for us – as believers – to *let sin reign in our lives*?
 - *Rom 6:12-13 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. 13 And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.*
- Is the following verse an *admonition*, a *promise*, or an *expectation*? Or is it all three?
 - *Rom 6:14 For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.*

Prophet for the Ages: Daniel's Prayer of Repentance

Questions To Ponder (cont.)

- Do we *sigh and cry* over the abominations and travesties of justice done in the world, our nation, and our cities?
 - *Eze 9:4 "Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and cry over all the abominations that are done within it."*
- Do we let the evil present in the world demoralize or discourage us? Or does it fill us with a sense of resolve to stand against the rulers of this dark world to be salt and light to the lost?
 - *Mat 5:13 "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.*
 - *Mat 5:14 "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.*