

Daniel 9:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake.

Analysis

Daniel's petition becomes more direct: 'Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake.' The word 'now' indicates urgency and transition from confession to petition. The request for God to 'hear' and for His face to 'shine upon' the desolate sanctuary uses covenantal language from the Aaronic blessing (Numbers 6:24-26). The phrase 'for the Lord's sake' (or 'for Your own sake') is crucial: Daniel doesn't ask based on Israel's merit but God's own interests—His glory, reputation, and covenant promises. The sanctuary's desolation is emphasized—the temple, God's dwelling place, lies in ruins. This appeals to God's own honor: will He allow His sanctuary to remain destroyed? This represents mature intercession: appealing not to our worthiness but to God's character, glory, and promises.

Historical Context

The temple's destruction (586 BC) was catastrophic for Israel—it was God's dwelling place, the center of worship, and symbol of His presence. Its ruins throughout the 70-year exile testified to God's judgment. Daniel's prayer comes near the exile's end (c. 538 BC), as Jeremiah's 70-year prophecy neared fulfillment. The request for God's face to shine reflects Numbers 6:24-26's priestly blessing—invoking covenant relationship language. Historically, the temple's rebuilding began shortly after this prayer (539-516 BC under Cyrus's decree), fulfilling

Daniel's petition. The appeal 'for the Lord's sake' rather than Israel's merit accurately framed restoration: it demonstrated God's covenant faithfulness and mercy, not Israel's deserving. Church history shows revivals similarly come through intercession appealing to God's glory rather than claiming human merit.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. What does praying 'for the Lord's sake' rather than 'for our sake' teach about proper prayer motivation?
2. How does using covenantal language (like the Aaronic blessing) strengthen intercession?
3. Why is appealing to God's glory and character more effective than claiming personal worthiness?

Interlinear Text

וְעַתָּה הִנֵּה	שָׁמַע	אֱלֹהֵינוּ	אֶל	תְּפִלַּת	עַבְדְּךָ	וְאֵל
H6258	hear	Now therefore O our God	H413	the prayer	of thy servant	H413
	H8085	H430		H8605	H5650	
וְהִנֵּנוּ יְיָ	וְהָאֵר	פָּנֶי יְיָ	עַל	מִקְדָּשְׁךָ		
and his supplications	to shine	and cause thy face	H5921	upon thy sanctuary		
H8469	H215	H6440		H4720		
הַשָּׁמֵם	לְמַעַן	אֲדֹנָיִךְ:				
that is desolate	H4616	for the Lord's				
H8076		H136				

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 80:19 (References God): Turn us again, O LORD God of hosts, cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.

Lamentations 5:18 (Parallel theme): Because of the mountain of Zion, which is desolate, the foxes walk upon it.

Psalms 80:3 (References God): Turn us again, O God, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.

Psalms 80:7 (References God): Turn us again, O God of hosts, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.