

Daniel 9:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

Daniel's prayer concludes with urgent petition: "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." The repeated "O Lord" (three times) creates emphatic urgency through direct address. The rapid imperatives—"hear...forgive...hearken...do...defer not"—pile up petitions demonstrating desperate earnestness. This isn't casual request but fervent pleading for immediate divine action.

The phrase "defer not, for thine own sake" appeals to God's self-interest—His own glory requires acting to restore His people and city. Daniel doesn't primarily argue Israel deserves mercy but that God's reputation demands intervention. The final clause—"thy city and thy people are called by thy name"—repeats the earlier appeal (v. 18): these bear God's name, making their condition reflect on Him. This theological insight grounds effective prayer: appealing to God's glory, not human merit.

This urgent prayer pattern appears throughout Scripture: Moses (Exodus 32:11-13), Hezekiah (2 Kings 19:15-19), Jehoshaphat (2 Chronicles 20:6-12). Each appeals to God's glory and promises, not human worthiness. Christ taught similar urgency in the parable of the persistent widow (Luke 18:1-8), encouraging believers to pray persistently until God answers. Daniel models passionate, theologically grounded intercession that moves heaven.

Historical Context

Daniel prayed this around 538 BC, near the seventy years' completion. His passionate urgency may reflect knowledge that the prophesied time approached, increasing confidence that God would soon act. Indeed, Cyrus's decree followed shortly (Ezra 1:1-4), demonstrating that biblically-informed, passionate prayer preceded and perhaps influenced the timing of divine deliverance.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 – Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does the repeated direct address and piled-up imperatives model passionate urgency in prayer?
2. What does appealing to God's glory ("for thine own sake") rather than human merit teach about effective prayer theology?
3. How should biblical promises increase confidence and urgency in prayer, as Daniel's awareness of the seventy years fueled passionate petition?

Interlinear Text

אָדָן	שְׁמָעָה	אָדָן	סָלָחָה	אָדָן	פָּקַד יְהָה	אָדָן	וְעַש	אָל
O Lord	hear	O Lord	forgive	O Lord	hearken	and do	not	
H136	H8085	H136	H5545	H136	H7181	H6213		H408

רְאֵם	לְמַעַב	אָלָה	שְׁמָךְ	גָּלוּ אָ
defer	H4616	for thine own sake O my God	H3588	by thy name
H309		H430	H8034	H7121

עַל	עִירָה	עַל	עָם:
H5921	for thy city	H5921	and thy people

Additional Cross-References

Daniel 9:18 (References God): 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.

Luke 11:8 (Parallel theme): I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.

Amos 7:2 (References God): And it came to pass, that when they had made an end of eating the grass of the land, then I said, O Lord GOD, forgive, I beseech thee: by whom shall Jacob arise? for he is small.

Jeremiah 14:7 (References Lord): O LORD, though our iniquities testify against us, do thou it for thy name's sake: for our backslidings are many; we have sinned against thee.

Jeremiah 14:9 (References Lord): Why shouldest thou be as a man astonished, as a mighty man that cannot save? yet thou, O LORD, art in the midst of us, and we are called by thy name; leave us not.

Ephesians 3:10 (References God): To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,

Ephesians 1:12 (Parallel theme): That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.

Numbers 14:19 (Parallel theme): Pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people according unto the greatness of thy mercy, and as thou hast forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now.
