

James Goll: Will You Be a Modern-Day Daniel?

In these days of division and tension, Daniel is a perfect role model of leadership and excellence as a watchman. When Daniel was exiled and found himself in the court of the king of Babylon, he dedicated himself to bringing the rule of God into that pagan place. He did it through stellar character and incessant prayer. He was a true intercessor, a watchman on the walls.

Daniel did not attend Hebrew University but rather was trained in the School of the Chaldeans. He invested himself entirely in both the success of the king under whom he had been forced to serve and the restoration of his people in Jerusalem, disregarding potential misunderstandings and serious repercussions. When he had come to understand the prophecies about the return of God's people to their homeland, he intensified his efforts, fasting, praying and repenting on behalf of his people.

He did not relax his guard or rest on the assumption that God would simply act to fulfill those prophetic promises automatically. There was not one bone of passivity in this man of exquisite character. He prayed all the more, helping to bring the prophetic promises into fulfillment in his generation.

By God's grace, he had the necessary wisdom to navigate tricky political shoals. Over the years, the king and other ruling authorities came and went, and many of them were less than friendly toward him. All of them were pagans whose values did not match Daniel's in the least.

How do you think Daniel would respond to your nation's leaders and political climate if he were living today? What are we

called to do in these perilous times? As God-fearing citizens, we would do well to follow his example.

Urged to Pray

Paul urged Timothy to pray—even for evil authorities (1 Tim. 2:1-4). He told him to pray for them, not against them, and to pray with two goals in mind: 1. “that we may lead a quiet and peaceful life in all godliness and honesty (v. 2b) and 2. so that everyone, both leaders and ordinary citizens, can be “saved and come to the knowledge of the truth” (v. 4b). How well is your life pointing those around you to these two endgames?

We can find other Scriptures that support this idea, for example:

“Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.” (1 Pet. 2:17).

“My son, fear the Lord and the king; and do not meddle with those who are given to change; for their calamity will rise suddenly, and who knows the ruin of them both?” (Prov. 24:21–22).

In addition to obeying laws and living lives that are above reproach, one of the ways we can honor those in authority is by praying for them. Since comparatively few citizens do, our prayers are all the more important. Whether we like our leaders, whether we agree with their policies or not, whether we voted for them or against them, we must pray.

Watchmen in a Bleak Time

I write as a citizen of the United States, which establishes my reference point. But I also think of Daniel’s Babylon and the situation of God’s watchmen in many other cities and nations throughout history. From my perspective in the U.S., the overall mood of the nation is both angry and divided.

Hopeful developments surface from time to time, only to crash into obstruction and disappointment. The national and international issues of our day are so complex that they even make my head spin!

Negative news seems to abound from every direction. It has become commonplace for us to see accusations, false promises, fake news and deteriorating ethics from our national leaders all the way down to our local municipalities—and it can really get exasperating. Perhaps most challenging of all, the sinful human condition is on full display 24/7, thanks to instant broadcasts.

But in spite of what it may seem, our prayers make all the difference in how things turn out. As Pastor Jack Hayford has stated, “You can determine whether God’s goodness is released toward specific situations or whether the power of sin and Satan is permitted to prevail. Prayer is the determining factor.”

Whatever our nation, we can pray that our leaders will govern honestly, humbly and with mercy. We can pray for them to have knowledge and understanding, which is more than mere information; it includes a grasp of history, roles, cultures and God’s will. Today’s global tyrants are as real as the Roman, Nero. Pray that God will deal with them swiftly, for the sake of His people. Pray that He will hedge in such dangerous leaders with limits and boundaries.

Prayers That Shape History

I learn from the heroes of faith in the Word of God but also from the champions of faith in modern church history. In my Christian pilgrimage, the teachings of Derek Prince have impacted my life, worldwide outreach and prayer ministry more than any other spiritual leader. From him I learned God’s heart for Israel, praying for those in authority, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, deliverance from demonic darkness, the power

of prayer and fasting and so much more. It is my great honor to state that this man was an effective, history-making and history-changing watchman.

Over the course of his eventful life, Derek Prince, who died in 2003 at the age of 88, went from being an atheist philosopher at Cambridge to a prolific Bible teacher who traveled the world. Married and widowed twice, he left behind 11 adopted children. Among his numerous teachings and 45 books is *Shaping History through Prayer and Fasting*, one of the greatest books of all time on the subject of government-focused prayer.

Derek was absolutely convinced that prayers could shape history and that often its influence was best exercised on the governmental level. Here is a quote from *Shaping History through Prayer and Fasting* that sums up his viewpoint:

In 2 Chronicles, God states the conditions which His people must fulfill for the healing of their land:

“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 will heal their land” (2 Chron. 7:14).

The prophecies and promises of God’s Word are intended to provoke us to pray with increased earnestness and understanding. God reveals to us the purposes which He is working out, not that we may be passive spectators on the sidelines of history, but that we may personally identify ourselves with His purposes, and thus become actively involved in their fulfillment. Revelation demands involvement.

Derek felt that the Lord’s call to Ezekiel to be a watchman (Ezek. 33:7–9) applied to him personally. He knew he must warn of danger and pray for God’s mercy on leaders who were

disobedient to God, in particular where the nation of Israel is concerned. The year before he died, he published an article that, in effect, warned those who would follow him as a watchman to pay attention to the Word of the Lord concerning the times in which they live.

The Scepter Has Been Lowered

Our God is not small, and He hears the cry of the poor (Ps. 69:33). Remember, He sits on the throne, and He is not wringing His hands in worry. No, He invites us to come sit on the throne with Him and extend His kingdom rule on earth as it is in heaven.

Jeremiah wrote, "Thus says the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel: ... Seek the peace of the city where I have caused you to be carried away captive, and pray to the Lord for it; for in its peace you will have peace" (Jer. 29:4, 7).

Your personal welfare depends upon the decisions of those who are in direct authority over you. But together, in Jesus, we can tip the scales from irreverence to righteousness.

So I have a question for you: Are there any Daniels or Esthers out there today? Will you answer the call to be a modern-day Daniel for this generation?

The scepter of the King of kings has been lowered. Now is the time. Take your place! You too, can shape history through prayer, release hope solutions to man's dilemmas and shift the culture for such a time as this. We can see the greatest awakening for Jesus Christ the planet has ever seen! {eoa}