

Quarterly Day of Prayer and Fasting

Pray Like Daniel:

The Secret to Rejoicing in Prayer

Devotional
and Resources

1st Quarter 2025

Sabbath, January 4

Prepared for church group and individual use by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in coordination with the Revival and Reformation Committee. Written by Shenalyn Page for the Day of Prayer global initiative. Visit www.revivalandreformation.org for more information.

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Invitation to “Pray Like Daniel”

Did you know that the prophetic book of Daniel is the only book in the Bible that specifically says it is for the “time of the end” (Daniel 8:17; 11:35, 40; 12:4, 9)? As such, shouldn’t it be of special interest to those of us living in the “time of the end”?

Bold prayers and their incredible answers are woven into the stories and prophecies of Daniel. As we examine the prophet’s prayers, we will find that the power to move God is not found simply in the words we use but also in the life we live. We will also see the potent results of persistent, Holy Spirit-led prayer. Heaven itself listens and answers! Join us as we learn to pray like Daniel.

Our theme for 2025 is “Pray Like Daniel: Inspiration for Last-day Praying.” In each quarter we will look at a high point of prayer in Daniel’s life and discover its relevance for life in the last days. Then we will devote ourselves to praying as he did.

In this first quarter we will look at Daniel’s prayer of praise in Daniel 2:20–23. We will explore how God leads us through experiences to a place where we can rejoice in prayer and experience the joy of answered prayer in our lives.

The materials that follow include a devotional as well as ideas, themes, and scriptures to help you plan a successful day of prayer and fasting in your church community. Please set aside significant time to pray as a part of your program, for only the Holy Spirit can bring the Word to life in our hearts and transform us into effective prayer warriors.

Inspiration tells us, “Could we see all the activity of human instrumentality, as it appears before God, we would see that only the work accomplished by much prayer, which is sanctified by the merit of Christ, will stand the test of the judgment” (*Christian Service*, p. 263).

Devotional: The Secret to Rejoicing Prayer

Loud, insistent rapping on the door startled Daniel. “Open up in the name of the king!”

Arioch, the captain of Nebuchadnezzar’s guard, burst into the room. “Get your friends, Belteshazzar! The king has ordered all the wise men of Babylon executed.”

Daniel laid aside the ancient Hebrew scroll and rose to his feet. He smiled at Arioch and asked, “Why is the decree from the king so urgent?” (Daniel 2:15).

“The king had a dream, and no one can tell him what he dreamed or what it means,” Arioch began, obviously shaken by the events of the morning. “Now he’s absolutely furious.”

“Can you take me to the king?” Daniel asked. “I believe there is a way out—for all of us.”

You know the rest of the story: God revealed the king’s dream to Daniel, and all the wise men were saved.

But wait! Have you ever stopped to consider how courageous it was for Daniel to request more time to interpret Nebuchadnezzar’s dream? How could he possibly think that he could interpret the king’s dream? To find the source of Daniel’s confidence—and his bold prayer that led to rejoicing praise—we must go back to the beginning of his story.

The Backstory

As a young man, Daniel was ripped away from his home and forced into the service of a powerful dictator. He lost everything—his family, his nation, his manhood, even his name. He had every right to be angry over the trauma he endured. Yet, the Bible tells us that Daniel chose a very different path.

Instead of feeling sorry for himself, Daniel placed his trust in God. He decided to continue worshiping God even though everything had gone wrong in his life. It wasn’t long until Daniel’s resolve was tested. The king commanded the captives in his elite school to consume food and wine dedicated to his idols. Daniel could have reasoned away his allegiance, but instead he made a choice that would change the trajectory of his entire life: “Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself” (Daniel 1:8). No matter the cost to himself, he would honor His Creator.

God rewarded Daniel’s loyalty and gave him and his friends “knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom” (Daniel 1:17). Indeed, the king “found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers who were in all his realm” (Daniel 1:20).

The Reason for Confidence

Daniel’s choice to honor God no matter the cost put his life on a path of obedience and authenticity. Because he chose to align ALL of his life with God, there were no hidden corners of selfishness or pride or depravity. Everything he did—his work, interactions with others, personal choices, and prayer life—was dedicated to the God he served. Faithfulness set the trajectory of Daniel’s life and formed the bedrock of his character.

By the time Arioch arrived at his door with the royal execution order, Daniel had already repeatedly tested his connection with God. He had experienced answers to prayer. He had even been gifted with understanding of visions and dreams (Daniel 1:17).

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Daniel's confidence before a furious dictator was based on absolute trust and conscious innocence before God. "Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God. And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight" (1 John 3:21, 22).

The Result: Rejoicing Prayer

"OK, guys. It's time to pray!" Daniel announced to his three friends when he returned from the king's audience chamber. "King Nebuchadnezzar is giving us until tomorrow morning to tell him his dream."

Take a moment to picture the earnestness of that united prayer meeting. So much was at stake for the four young exiles as they bowed before the King of the universe to request mercy for themselves and a bunch of heathen wise men! How close all heaven must have bent to hear their supplications!

Then, with complete faith that God had heard their prayer, the four young men went to sleep. During the night God revealed "the secret" of Nebuchadnezzar's dream to Daniel.

"Wake up! Wake up!" Daniel must have shouted, waking his three friends. "God has answered our prayer! We must praise Him!"

And they did, offering a sublime prayer filled with rejoicing and praise to God.

"Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, for wisdom and might are His. And He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and raises up kings; He gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding. He reveals deep and secret things; He knows what is in the darkness, and light dwells with Him. I thank You and praise You, O God of my fathers; You have given me wisdom and might, and have now made known to me what we asked of You, for You have made known to us the king's demand" (Daniel 2:20–23).

Notice *when* Daniel praised God: He began thanking God as soon as he received the divine revelation. There was still a death threat on his life, but Daniel chose to praise God for deliverance as soon as he had the assurance of God's Word.

The Secret of Rejoicing Prayer

Do you long for a prayer life like Daniel's? One where you know God personally and are regularly experiencing the joy of answered prayer? You can have it. That kind of prayer life is possible for all of us. In fact, it is exactly the life Jesus wants for each of us. He never intended for us to live wimpy Christian lives filled with failures, anxiety, and hopelessness.

God wants to answer every one of our prayers. Seven times in Jesus' final conversation with His disciples He told them to ask for what they needed and He would give it to them (see John 14:13, 14; 15:7, 16; 16:23, 24, 26).

But there is a condition to Jesus' promise: "*If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you*" (John 15:7). Vital, living connection with Jesus is the secret to answered prayer. We must give Him full permission to live His life through us if we want to pray boldly and rejoice greatly.

This was Daniel's secret. He had purposed never to defile himself. "The approval of God was dearer to him . . . than life itself" (*Prophets and Kings*, p. 483). He had determined to be wholly God's and learned how to abide in Him. Daniel's vital connection with Yahweh allowed him to pray with confidence and rejoicing.

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Rejoicing in the Last Days

As earth approaches its darkest hour, we can be sure that Satan will offer us a multitude of opportunities to defile ourselves. Will we determine to guard our souls from contamination as Daniel did? Will we seek the holiness that comes from a life of absolute surrender to the indwelling Word of God? Will we seek the abiding friendship with Jesus that will enable us to stand firmly for Him?

If we will, then we may rest assured that our Savior will hear our prayers. We can rejoice in His promise: “The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much” (James 5:16).

We can lean our full weight on the promises of His Word. Even before we see the complete answers, like Daniel, we can be assured that God is working and that at the proper time we will receive the answers we seek. We can rejoice in prayer—no matter how dark things may seem—because we know the One *who* “gives wisdom . . . and knowledge . . . [and] reveals deep and secret things; He knows what is in the darkness, and light dwells with Him” (Daniel 2:21, 22).

Sabbath Theme and Prayer Program Suggestions

Theme: Rejoicing Prayer (Daniel 2:20–23).

Sabbath Morning: We suggest building your entire Sabbath service on the stories of Daniel 1 and 2. This should include every element of your program. You may also want to review *Prophets and Kings*, chapters 39 and 40

- Sermon should explore the stories of Daniel 1 and 2 and help people see that it was the life of faithfulness to God that allowed Daniel to praise God and pray confidently.
- Children's story can be a creative retelling of Daniel 1 to make it applicable to youth.
- As much as possible, use the music, scripture readings, and other aspects of the program to call the congregation to a commitment to praise and faithfulness.

Afternoon Prayer and Bible Study Program: Meet either with the whole church, in groups in a comfortable room, or in someone's home. If meeting in person is not possible, you might use a video service such as Zoom or meet via telephone or some other platform. We recommend 2–3 hours for this afternoon program of prayer and Bible study.

- Just before starting your prayer time, share the devotional above and any other inspired passages and quotes the Holy Spirit leads you to share with the group.
- Most of the time will be spent in corporate prayer, but if time allows you may break into smaller groups for Bible study and more personal prayer requests.
- Suggested prayer passages: Daniel 1 and 2, especially 2:20–23; Psalms 111; Philippians 4:4–7; Colossians 1:9–14; 1 Thessalonians 5:18. Close with a united time of thanksgiving with the whole group.
- Set aside an area for smaller children and ask someone to watch over them during the prayer time. Children can be introduced to simple concepts about God and prayer while in "play time." You can find ideas for teaching children about prayer here: <https://www.ministerialassociation.org/prayer/teaching-children-to-pray/>.
- Invite friends and family to your prayer time.
- Have everything ready for the prayer session. Prepare the songs in advance.
- Have a special supper and testimony time in the evening. Ask participants to bring a snack or potluck dish. Sharing a meal and friendly conversation after prayer helps to build a community spirit.
- Allow the Holy Spirit to lead your plans.