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## **PRESIDENT'S LETTER - JANUARY 07**

### **The Prayer of Daniel**

This New Year, I pray the prayer of Daniel for the Church of the Lutheran Confession, for my congregation, and most of all for me. Daniel, a captive in Babylon, prayed for God's Old Testament covenant people. His prayer is recorded in Daniel 9. This prayer is a cry for help to the Creator God. Daniel prayed to the Lord, his God, "O Lord, great and awesome God." This God is the almighty, creator of the heavens and earth. This living God is the One Who alone is able to open the book and bring the future to pass. The Lord God is righteous and fair in all He does.

This is also the God Who has mercy and forgiveness for His rebellious people. Daniel prays to the God "Who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him and with those who keep His commandments." This is the covenant Lord God who keeps His promises, "And now O Lord our God, who brought Your people out of Egypt with a mighty hand and made Yourself a name." Our God is faithful and keeps His word.

Today we also direct our cries for help and deliverance toward the living God, Who kept His Word and sent Jesus, His Son, into this sinful world to be our Savior. We ask God to be with us, to protect us from all danger, and to take us to the Promised Paradise. As we begin another year, we set our face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.

Daniel offered prayers to God on behalf of sinful people. This is a people with a history of rebellion and wickedness directed against the righteousness and holiness of God. We have seen this time after time in the history of Old Testament Israel. But more important, we see this is our history as a church and as individuals. Daniel's prayer is our prayer.

We pray today, "I made confession and said, We have sinned and committed iniquity, we have done wickedly and rebelled, even by departing from Your precepts and Your judgments. Neither have we heeded Your servants the prophets, who spoke to our kings and princes, to our fathers and all the people of the land." We also confess that we have committed many iniquities and rebelled. O Lord, often we have not listened to Your Word. Your Word has not always been the source of our life and strength.

"O Lord, to us belongs shame of face...because we have sinned against You....We have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in His laws." (Daniel 9:11) "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." We confess our shortcomings and tendency to put ourselves first.

The righteous Judge sends judgment against those who sin against Him in order to turn us to Him. (Daniel 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. 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." Even when Judah was taken into captivity and the glory departed from the house of David, God's people did not turn to Him. God had allowed the nations to take His people into the Babylonian captivity.

God permits his judgment to come upon this world and His people so that they will listen to His voice. God tests us individually and as congregations so that we will turn to Him in repentance. Let us humble ourselves as we look to the end of this world and the second coming of Jesus. How have we responded to the testing the Lord has permitted to come upon us?

We pray with Daniel:

(Daniel 9:16-19) "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. 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. 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. 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."

We ask that God would forgive us for Jesus' sake and turn His righteous anger away from us. We ask that the Lord God would hear our prayers and supplications. Please God open your ears and hear our cries. We pray that God would see our needs and deliver us because of His great mercies.

O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and act! Do not delay but come to our aid today.

May the Lord restore to you the joy of your salvation this new year and gladden your hearts with God's great act of salvation.

Glory to God in highest heaven, Who unto us His Son hath given!  
While angels sing with pious mirth A glad new year to all the earth.

Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift,



John Schierenbeck

I would encourage pastors to share information from the CLC with their congregations. This is a part of our responsibilities as brothers and shepherds of our flocks. I also would ask you to encourage your congregations to make a long-term commitment to the work the Lord has put before us as the Church of the Lutheran Confession.

Please remember Pastor Kevin McKenney and Julie Lau in your prayers.