

Sermon Title: “**Breaking Generational Curses and Praying Revival**”

Introduction

This weekend our church has our leadership inner healing and deliverance retreat. Its focus will be on both cleansing and freeing the current leadership and also training them up to be ministers of healing and deliverance to others. The focus of this inner healing and deliverance training is more on a personal level, with most of the sessions held for individuals. What I’ll be sharing tonight is how to pray for deliverance for a larger scale. The title for tonight’s sermon is, “Breaking Generational Curses and Praying Revival.”

Pray (release revelation Lord!)

What are Generational Curses?

Before we get into breaking generational curses, we first have to know what they are and how to identify them. Generational curses are curses that result in a particular sin or consequence of sin not only applying to the initial trespassers, but to their descendants as well.

Generational curses are all throughout Scripture. Some apply to families... we see Abraham had an issue with honesty and this continued with his son Isaac and only got worse with his grandson Jacob. We see David had an issue with lust and this sin only got worse for his sons Ammon, Absalom, and Solomon. Even his grandson Rehoboam had 18 wives and 60 concubines. Generational curses can also apply to nations... we see Israel and later Judah become so wrapped up in sin that their land becomes cursed and they become exiled.

Surprisingly, curses are a part of God’s character. When God reveals His glory to Moses in Exodus 34, He says these words...

Exodus 34:6-7 – The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children’s children, to the third and the fourth generation.

God states that He is loving, forgiving, and merciful. **But He also makes it clear that He is also a God of justice.** If there is a root of sin that seeps into His people, He will administer justice until that root is either cleansed or pulled out. **Curses are both a form of justice and of discipline.** Deuteronomy 28 has a thorough 54 verses set aside for explaining generational curses and their consequences. Leviticus 26 has 32 verses set aside for generational curses. A theme of the chapter is, “Then if you walk contrary to me and will not listen to me, I will continue striking you, sevenfold for your sins” (Leviticus 26:21). This theme is given four times amidst the explanation of curses.

So how do generational curses get in? Exodus 20:4-6 makes it clear that violating the second commandment, idolatry, can result in a generational curse. In my experience doing deliverance ministry it has been the sins of the occult (seeking knowledge or power from a source other than God, such as tarot cards, palm reading, mediums, etc), and severe sins such as murder or sexual perversion whose consequences are often passed down. These curses can result in divorce being common, fits of anger, depression, poverty, disease, early death, or other consequences. These curses can infiltrate not just families but even nations. All of North Korea has continued on in idolatry and injustice for so long that the nation has nearly all the curses of Deuteronomy 28 being fulfilled in it.

God doesn't want the curses to continue. He doesn't want the consequences of sin to consume His creation. God wants repentance. He wants His people turning to Him for deliverance. He wants His people to be pure and holy, walking in His complete blessing.

With that said, please open your Bible to Daniel 9. We are going to look through this chapter as God's model given to us for breaking generational curses. This prayer was similarly prayed by Nehemiah and can be found in Nehemiah 1. Both prayers resulted in wonderful moves of God.

Background to Daniel 9

Here is some quick background information to this prayer. Daniel is an exile living in the pagan country Babylon. His people, the Jews, have been brought out from their homeland and their beloved city Jerusalem has been left desolate for nearly 70 years. Now, let's get into the chapter...

Daniel 9:1-3 – In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, by descent a Mede, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans—in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, perceived in the books the number of years that, according to the word of the Lord to Jeremiah the prophet, must pass before the end of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years.

Perceived

Please underline or mark the word, "Perceived." If we want to be used by God to break curses and free people from bondage, we need to be actively seeking revelation from God. Daniel was looking in the right place: he was reading the Scripture. God may give us revelation through dreams, visions, prophetic words, or words of knowledge, but these revelations will always be grounded upon His Word. It is His truth that sets us free.

John 8:32 – And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

Perceived. If we desire to see freedom, we must be in tune with the Holy Spirit. 2Corinthians 3:17 says, "Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom." **If we want to perceive God's knowledge, we must both ask for revelation and study His Word.** Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you (Matthew 7:7, NIV). Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things (Jeremiah 33:3, NIV). As a greater spirit of wisdom and revelation is received by the church, we will see greater freedom in the lives and nations around us.

Seventy Years

Next, I want you to mark or underline the words "Seventy years." In Jeremiah 25:11-12 we read a clear prophecy that for 70 years the Jews will be put in exile in Babylon and Jerusalem will be left desolate. According to historical dating, Daniel was reading this towards the very tail end of the 70 years. There was likely just three or four years left of the punishment. By now Daniel is a very old man. Likely nearly all of his former relatives and friends have passed away. He is likely too old to ever return to Jerusalem even if he was presented the chance. God's word also clearly says that there are 70 years meant for Jerusalem's desolation. **But none of this stops Daniel from praying.** In fact, now that he understands that God does in fact plan to redeem Jerusalem, he can't help but cry out to God for this redemption to come quickly.

Daniel understands that prophetic words are not given to make us relax or feel given to fate, rather prophetic words are given to encourage us in prayer. Many Christian leaders and prophets have spoken that North Korea and South Korea will be reunified. There have been

many encouraging prophecies given that North Korea will be redeemed and used in a powerful way. Does this mean that we don't need to pray for North Korea? Does this mean its going to happen whether we pray or not? NO!!! To not pray would be lazy and fatalistic. Instead we are called to take responsibility over the revelations we've received and claim God's promises. God often reveals prophetic words when faith is needed. He wants the best for us and He will grant us these words to pray and claim while waiting for what He has in store for us. He doesn't want us to settle for less. If the decision or vision is not important, then God would not speak. But when God does speak to us, we need to take His words to heart and claim them.

Some of you have received a word, vision or calling for life, your family, your company, your church, or even your nation. Claim it in prayer and continue to claim it! To ignore it is to ignore a message from God.

Daniel 9:3 – Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking him by prayer and pleas for mercy with fasting and sackcloth and ashes.”

Turned My Face to the Lord God

Go ahead and mark or underline the words, “Turned my face to the Lord God.” Daniel has received a revelation. He has the Word of God before him. His next step is to now turn to God. If we want to be used by God to set captives free and help bring revival, then we must have our gaze focused on God. We must have our faces turned to Him. Prayer and fasting are what marks true deliverers. Jesus even says in Mark 9:29 that to cast out the most wicked of demons we must be living lives of prayer and fasting. It is prayer and fasting that enable us to be humble and fully surrendered to the Lord. Its not our actions that are going to save the world, its God's actions that are going to save the world. **Its as we pray and fast that we are able to align ourselves with God's heart and be a part of His plans.**

We can also see from this verse that Daniel did not pray just once and expect God to move. He prayed continually. He fasted and sought God's mercies. **There was persistence.** It is as we are consistent in prayer that we are going to see breakthrough. There are a number of times in Scripture where even the greatest of prophets had to continually intercede and wait before God would answer them. The walls of Jericho showed no signs of crumbling during the long seven days of marching, and then they suddenly fell apart. Do not give up if you see no progress. In the natural, things may seem the same, but in the spiritual a great war is occurring. Pray it through!

Daniel 9:4 – I prayed to the Lord my God and made confession, saying, “O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments.”

The Great and Awesome God

Next you can mark the words, “The great and awesome God.” Daniel did not begin his prayer with his demands. He did not cry out in despair or in anger. Instead, **Daniel came before God with praise.** Daniel understood that God is sovereign. Daniel understood that even if everything is chaos on earth, God alone is worthy to be praised and that He **MUST** be praised. The best way to praise God before going into intercessory prayer is to state God's character.

Deliverance, breaking curses, revival... all these things are not manufactured. They are not done apart from God. We cannot expect to simply pray the same robotic prayers and see God move in mighty ways. God wants friendship. He desires a relationship with us. If you desire to grow in spiritual authority, then you must grow in your friendship with God. This means

knowing who God is and knowing who you are in God; knowing your identity in Christ. The closer we draw near Him and the more we know Him, the more confident we become in our prayers.

In verse 4, Daniel praised God for His faithfulness and he praised God for His love. Daniel knew that his people the Jews had done nothing to deserve redemption or deliverance. His confidence in his prayers was not in himself or his people, but rather his confidence was in the grace and love of the Almighty God.

If we are seized with fear, when we pray we should begin by praising God that He is all-powerful and all-loving. This helps us remember to not despair in prayer. If we have sinned and are being attacked by guilt, when we pray we should begin by praising God for His grace, His love, and His compassion. This helps us to not doubt the forgiveness of God that we are about to request. Knowing His character grants us greater confidence and security as we approach God in prayer.

Daniel has humbled himself in fasting in prayer. Now he is lifting God up in praise. He has put both God and himself in perfect position in prayer. Humility in himself, and confidence in God. This is something I will cover more in a moment.

Daniel 9:5 – We have sinned and done wrong and acted wickedly and rebelled, turning aside from your commandments and rules.

We

Please underline or mark the word, “We.” This part is critical to breaking generational curses and ushering in revival. Generational curses and revival are not a matter of me versus them. We are all in this together. All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23, NIV). If I am confessing idolatry that my grandfather had committed, I must include myself in the prayers. It's not my grandfather who sinned, but “us” who sinned. Have I never committed idolatry? Am I completely clean of ever putting something in front of God in my life? What if I'm confessing murder in my family? Am I free of hate? Jesus said that to hate your brother or sister is the same as murder. If Daniel, one of the most pure and admirable men to have ever lived, someone God compared to Noah and Job (Ezekiel 14:14), confesses that he too is a sinner, then how could I claim to be completely clean? Your family is part of your identity. Just like physical diseases and addictions, the sins they committed before your birth can also project onto you, whether you want them to or not. Your country is also part of your identity. This does not mean that we need to follow in the sin of our family or our nation, but what it means is that we need identify ourselves with the sin as we bring it before God. Only Jesus is the true deliverer and we **all** need His deliverance.

Long Confession

The following ten verses include a long and thorough confession of sins on behalf of Daniel and his people. I want us to look at a theme in the confession. I'm going to read the beginning of verse 7, verse 9, and verse 15.

Daniel 9:7a – To you, O Lord, belongs righteousness, but to us open shame.

Daniel 9:9 – To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness, for we have rebelled against him.

Daniel 9:15 – And now, O Lord, our God, who brought your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and have made a name for yourself, as at this day, we have sinned, we have done wickedly.

Did you catch the theme? All throughout the confession, Daniel remains in a place of humility before God. There can be a desire among people seeking deliverance to blame God for their oppression or suffering. They may want to ask, “How could such a just God allow such pain and bondage?” But the question should really be, “How could such a just God redeem and accept such undeserving sinners?”

We need to follow the example of how Daniel prays as we seek deliverance and revival... humility in ourselves and confidence in God. **Its not by our strength or our might that anything worthy can be accomplished, its only by His Spirit working through us.** We are able to approach God with confidence not out of anything we have done or deserve, but by His grace and His grace alone. The deliverance of our family or of our nation hinges only upon the grace of God. It is this grace that we must continually cling to as we pray and look for God’s redemption and revival.

Intercession

After the long confession, Daniel goes into a prayer of intercession for his people and for the city Jerusalem. Look with me at verses 17-19...

Daniel 9:17-19 – Now therefore, O our God, listen to the prayer of your servant and to his pleas for mercy, and for your own sake, O Lord, make your face to shine upon your sanctuary, which is desolate. O my God, incline your ear and hear. Open your eyes and see our desolations, and the city that is called by your name. For we do not present our pleas before you because of our righteousness, but because of your great mercy. O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive. O Lord, pay attention and act. Delay not, for your own sake, O my God, because your city and your people are called by your name.

For Your Own Sake

“For your own sake.” Go ahead and mark those words, both in verse 17 and verse 19. Daniel understood that all creation was made for the glory of God. And by the Jews being redeemed and Jerusalem being rebuilt, God would receive glory to His name. Other famous men of God based their prayers in the same way, “For Your glory and for the sake of Your great name.” God is going to act for His own glory whether we pray or we don’t, but its as we confess these prayers asking for God to glorify Himself that we are aligning ourselves with His plans. We can have confidence that God loves us and hears our prayers. We can have confidence that God wants to bless us and provide for us and our family and our nation. But more than anything, we can have confidence that God is meant to be glorified above everything else. As we submit our family and our nation to His glory, we can be confident that He is listening and will come in power. It is His glory that is at stake!

Pay Attention and Act

Next, I want you to mark in verse 19 the words, “pay attention and act.” Daniel once again demonstrates persistence and passion in prayer. He knows that he did not receive a revelation of his country’s restoration for nothing. He knows God gave it to him to encourage him in prayer and Daniel will not stop praying until he sees God respond. Even if you have been praying for your family or for the healing of your nation for years, do not give up!

While in Myanmar our mission team prayed for a pastor named Gabriel who had been sick and afflicted with a powerful curse for over a year. We prayed for him for five hours, and for the first four and a half hours we saw almost no progress at all. During all this time Pastor Gabriel remained slouched in his chair, seemingly defeated to what was ailing him. Our only sign of life was occasionally his right hand shook just a little. But we continued to pray. Our endurance rested on the prophetic words of different members of the team that he would in

fact be healed and that it would take time. We continued to pray, strengthened now and then by a vision God would give a team member. It was at the 4 and a half hour mark that there was suddenly life. Pastor Gabriel finally began to join us in prayer for himself. Within minutes he was standing up. And after another 20 or 30 minutes, he was raising his hands up in worship. Before he hadn't been able to stand for more than 5 or 7 minutes. It was clear God was doing a mighty work in him. Praise God!

When we pray for the deliverance of our family or our nation, we must persevere! While we may see nothing in the natural, we must have confidence that in the spiritual realm a great battle is taking place. And the more we pray, the more the enemy is beaten back. And at some point, the enemy will be defeated and we will see the fruit of our prayers.

If we read on in Daniel 9, we see that God's response to Daniel's prayers was sudden. It was as Daniel was in the middle of his fervent prayers that the angel Gabriel arrived with a powerful prophetic message for him. God rewarded Daniel's perseverance.

Conclusion

As the church leadership goes through the inner healing and deliverance retreat, likely a number of you will have generational curses to confess in your sessions. Breaking them off of you is easy. Like Daniel, we have to confess the sins of our family on behalf of them. Unlike Daniel, we have the blood of Jesus to redeem us from every sin and every curse. After confessing the sins and praying God's blood and grace over the sin and over the family, the curses can easily be broken off of us. We have God's promise in Galatians 3:13...

Galatians 3:13 – Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree.”

But while praying for curses over our own lives is easy, it is praying for our unsaved family members and our nations that takes time. Like Daniel, we have to set our faces towards God and approach Him persistently with confidence in His grace, seeking His glory in our family and in our nation. We can be confident that in due time, the Lord will come and reveal Himself.

Let's pray.