

**Growth Group Study – Breakthrough Prayers – Daniel**  
**Bible Readings Daniel 6.1-16 & Daniel 10-1-14**  
**3 February 2019 - John Malcolm**

**Have any of the group ever visited the Royal albatross colony at Taiaroa head near Dunedin?**

If so tell the group about your experience. If not, have you ever watched a nature programme which shows a bird hatch, fledge, and become strong enough to fly? How does a bird learn to fly?

Webcam - <https://www.doc.govt.nz/nature/native-animals/birds/birds-a-z/albatrosses/royal-albatross-toroa/royal-cam/>

**In the sermon this Sunday John said, *prayer is like a two-winged bird and both wings are needed in order to fly. One wing is what we bring to prayer, the other wing, invisible to us, is what God brings to prayer.***

If this reflects the nature of prayer, what is the wing of Greyfriars or this group like:

Strong and prepared for flight?

Yet to be developed?

There but seldom used?

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**Read Daniel 1.1-4, 7 & 19-20**

What do we learn about Daniel and the other young men with him?

**Read Daniel 9:2–3, Jeremiah 29:10–14 & James 4:2–3**

What did Daniel know about God's plans?

If God had already revealed His plans, why did Daniel feel the need to plead with God in prayer about them?

What breakthrough was Daniel seeking in prayer?

In his message John said, *Many people love the verse that says "I know the plans I have for you", but have forgotten what follows about calling on God, praying and seeking God wholeheartedly. You cannot cherry pick the benefits and neglect the responsibility of prayerfully seeking God.*

What is the link between prayer, calling on/seeking God, and His promise of good plans?

How might Daniel's prayers be a fulfilment of Jeremiah's prophecy?

If Daniel is reminding God of his promises by taking them back to God in prayer, how might we use God's promises in our own prayers?

**Read Daniel 9:18.**

What does this tell us about Daniel and about God?

What do you know from Daniel's experience in life that would have shaped his prayerful attitude towards God?

Sometimes as humans we think, *God won't listen to me because I am not good enough* and conversely, *after all I have done why isn't God listening to my prayers?* Why do you think we tend towards these merit based ideas of why God might/might not answer our prayers?

**John noted God did not simply change government policy about gathering the best young people in Babylon, He changed the government when the Persians conquered Babylon.**

What does this tell us about the power of God in world affairs?

**Read Daniel 6:1–5 & 10**

What does this teach us about Daniel's character compared to that of his rivals?

What was the perceived weakness/chink in Daniel's armour his rivals sought to exploit?

If people in our day wanted to cause us to fall into such a trap, would they find our prayer-life as predictable?

Daniel was aware of the trap they had set, yet he still prayed regularly and openly – why do you think he did this?

How might *facing Jerusalem* have been symbolic of Daniel's trust in God?

**Read Daniel 10.2-14, Matthew 17.5-7**

John said, the only thing faster than the speed of light is the speed of prayer. What do we learn about God's response to Daniel's prayer?

What do you find interesting/challenging about these passages?

Have you ever seen a vision of an angel (or know someone who has)? If so tell the group about it.

Why do you think those with Daniel fled (7)?

Why do you think it took this being twenty-one days to appear to Daniel, and what does this reveal about unseen spiritual activities?

**Read Ephesians 6.10-20**

Why do you think we often focus on other people as the source of our problems, taking aim at them?

What does Paul identify as the true source of our struggles?

Which attributes does Paul see as part of our spiritual armour?

How can these attributes help us live in the challenging world we face today?

When we have this armour in place, what does Paul say we should do? (18-20)

What might happen if we attempted to pray without putting on this spiritual armour?

Considering your own life experiences, how dented, scuffed and worn is your spiritual armour? Discuss with the group ways in which you have found this armour useful?

**Read Jeremiah 33.3, Matthew 7.7-12, John 16.24, Rom 8.26-27 & Hebrews 7.25**

John said, *effective prayer requires both wings to take flight, but our problem is that we only ever see one wing*. What might give you confidence that God's unseen wing is strong, flexed and ready when we stretch out our wing of prayer?

**For reflection:**

- Consider what keeps you from soaring in prayer?
- What could you do to strengthen your "prayer wing" in the coming week?
- Can you think of any promises God has made that you would like to remind him about as you pray?