



BISHOP'S
June 16 **POST** July 16



Daniel needed!

I must admit: I was angry and upset. This was about the speech of the state president after the Constitutional Court ruling on the Public Protector's report. What he called an apology was in actual fact a shifting of blame from himself to his advisors. No taking of any responsibility.

I fully supported the delegation of Church leaders that then appealed to him to do the honourable thing and step down.

It only took a day or two for officials to drum up another delegation of Church leaders that said exactly the opposite and pronounced forgiveness and support.

What are we to do as Christians in this time and situation? In times like these we need Daniels and Danielas. Let me explain.

When Jerusalem was captured by the Babylonians, a large number of Jews were taken along to exile in Babylon. There the Babylonian king had a clever plan. Some very talented young Jews were hand picked to be trained and educated in his court and religion. These Babylonian trained Jews would then be used as court officials, assisting in keeping their countrymen at bay and thus strengthening the conqueror.

However, no one foresaw that Daniel would, despite all training and teaching, remain true to his faith, and became an example hero of faith and faithfulness.

But this is not what I mean when I say that we are in need of Daniel. Daniel did something much bigger than remain faithful to God. In Daniel 9 we read a prayer of Daniel for his people and his nation.

“I prayed to the Lord my God and confessed: “Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with those who love him and keep his commandments, we have sinned and done wrong. We have been wicked and have rebelled ...”

Do you notice what is happening here? Daniel had every right to distance himself from the wrongs that his countrymen did - but he does not. He says: WE have sinned. He does not apportion blame to others, does not excuse himself. Rather he joins the ranks of all the wrongdoers and puts into words what others try to deny. “We are covered with shame, we have not obeyed the Lord”.

Daniel could have distanced himself from his people - but instead he makes their wrongs his own. In that he becomes a forerunner of Jesus. Jesus, son

of God, took on himself the wrongs that others had done, the sin of the whole world, and with that broke the power of sin.

We need Daniels and Danielas, Christians who cry to the Lord on behalf of all of us. We need the cries and prayers of believers that say: We are guilty - even if they themselves have been blameless.

Are you a Daniel, a Daniela? I must admit that I find it very difficult to be one. I ask forgiveness for my own mistakes, and get angry at the mistakes of others.

And so I pray: Lord, help me to make the pain of this country my own. Help me to weep and cry to you, rather than first pointing fingers.

Daniel's prayer shows that he minced no words. He was very clear on what went wrong. But he first took it to the Lord, before then addressing the issues. This paved the way for the return of the Jews from Exile.

Jesus's carrying our sins paved the way to salvation and a new life to his glory.

We are in need of Daniel and Daniela - men and women who are willing to intercede as if they themselves were the perpetrators, and then deal with the issues. This might be the beginning of the healing of our nation.

Lord, make me a Daniel! *Host Müller*

News from the Church

1. Pastor **Mark Meier** was elected by the Piet Retief congregation, to commence his duties there in January 2017. With this Concordia congregation (Gerdau) becomes vacant. May the Lord guide the process of filling that post.
2. **ELCSA (N-T) and Cape Church Council** will meet from 22 - 24 July 2016 in Stellenbosch as part of the working towards a merger. May the Lord guide them in this process.
3. We congratulate **Hermannsburg School** on its 160th birthday which was celebrated in May. May the School continue to be a blessing to many!
4. **Are you called to become a pastor?** Please speak to your pastor about it. The Church is offering bursaries to assist prospective full time students. The University of Stellenbosch is the preferred place to study.
5. You are invited to a **Contemporary Music Festival** on 24 July 2016 in New Germany. It is the second time that this takes place. May God bless this initiative.
6. A hearty word of thanks to the Piet Retief congregation for hosting the biannual **brass festival**, and to all those who contributed towards the wonderful celebration!