

An Example of a Confession

Daniel's eschatological prophecies were quoted or referred to the most 600 years later when the New Testament was being composed. Few have been esteemed by God as highly as the prophet Daniel, and he was noted for his deep love for God's people.

He was at least 80 years old, around the year 538 B.C., when he learns of what would be known as "Daniel's 70th week" (Dan 9:20-27). After making this confession, the angel Gabriel came and spoke, "O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you insight with understanding. At the beginning of your supplications the word was issued, so I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed; so understand the message and gain understanding in what has appeared" (Dan 9:22-23, LSB).

1. What can we learn from Daniel's confession that God thought well of? A good method of study is to break the passage up into parts. What do you observe of Daniel's attitude in the opening of his confession?

3) So I gave my face to the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.

4) And I prayed to Yahweh my God and confessed and said, "Alas, O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and lovingkindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments, (Dan 9:3-4, LSB)

2. What do you observe of Daniel's acknowledgment of sin?

5) we have sinned and committed iniquity and acted wickedly and rebelled, even turning aside from Your commandments and judgments.

6) Moreover, we have not listened to Your slaves the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings, our princes, our fathers, and all the people of the land. (Dan 9:5-6, LSB)

3. What do you observe of Daniel's characterization of God's judgment?

7) "To You, O Lord, belongs righteousness, but to us open shame, as it is this day—to the men of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and all Israel, those who are nearby and those who are far away in all the countries to which You have banished them, because of their unfaithful deeds which they have committed against You.

8) O Yahweh, to us belongs open shame, to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, because we have sinned against You. 9) To the Lord our God belong compassion and forgiveness, for we have rebelled against Him; 10) nor have we listened to the voice of Yahweh our God, to walk in His laws which He put before us through His slaves the prophets.

11) Indeed all Israel has trespassed against Your law, even turning aside, not listening to Your voice; so the curse has been poured out on us, along with the oath which is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, for we have sinned against Him. (Dan 9:7-11, LSB)

4. What do you observe of Daniel's understanding of God and the people of God? What does Daniel acknowledge?

12) Thus He has established His words which He had spoken against us and against our judges who judged us, to bring on us great calamity; for under the whole heaven there has not been done anything like what was done to Jerusalem. 13) As it is written in the law of Moses, all this calamity has come on us; yet we have not entreated the favor of Yahweh our God by turning from our iniquity and acting wisely in Your truth. 14) Therefore Yahweh has watched over the calamity and brought it on us; for Yahweh our God is righteous with respect to all His deeds which He has done, but we have not listened to His voice. 15) "So now, O Lord our God, who have brought Your people out of the land of Egypt with a strong hand and have made a name for Yourself, as it is this day—we have sinned; we have acted wickedly. (Dan 9:12-15, LSB)

5. What do you observe of Daniel's petitions as a man at least 80 years old? What is his attitude?

16) O Lord, in accordance with all Your righteousness, let now Your anger and Your wrath turn away from Your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain; for because of our sins and the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people have become a reproach to all those around us.

17) So now, our God, listen to the prayer of Your slave and to his supplications, and for Your sake, O Lord, let Your face shine on Your desolate sanctuary.

18) O my God, incline Your ear and listen! Open Your eyes and see our desolations and the city which is called by Your name; for we are not presenting our supplications before You on account of any righteousness of our own, but on account of Your abundant compassion.

19) O Lord, listen! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, give heed and take action! For Your own sake, O my God, do not delay, because Your city and Your people are called by Your name." (Dan 9:16-19, LSB)

An Example of a Confession

Teacher Notes

Daniel's eschatological prophecies were quoted or referred to the most 600 years later when the New Testament was being composed. Few have been esteemed by God as highly as the prophet Daniel, and he was noted for his deep love for God's people.

He was at least 80 years old, around the year 538 B.C., when he learns of what would be known as "Daniel's 70th week" (Dan 9:20-27). After making this confession, the angel Gabriel came and spoke, "O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you insight with understanding. At the beginning of your supplications the word was issued, so I have come to tell you, for you are highly esteemed; so understand the message and gain understanding in what has appeared" (Dan 9:22-23, LSB).

Explain to the student what "eschatological" means.

Eschatology is the study of the end of human history. It is a compound noun from two Greek terms:

"eschatos" means "last" with a view towards final, closing or concluding.

"logos" means "word."

Eschatology is the study of "last words."

Explain to the student who the prophet Daniel was.

By 600 B.C., the nation of Israel irrevocably broke the Mosaic Covenant and were expelled from the Promised Land. Daniel and his friends were deported to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar.

Later, Cyrus the Great conquers the Neo-Babylonian Empire and Daniel serves under him. Despite a new edict of praying to the statute of the king, Daniel continues to pray three times a day to God giving thanks for God's blessings. For this violation, he and his friends are tossed into the lions' den, and survive the next morning (Dan 6:1-21). Daniel's survival testified to Cyrus the Great of the real existence of God and the integrity of Daniel's service to God and indirectly to Cyrus himself (Dan 6:17-28).

1. What can we learn from Daniel's confession that God thought well of? A good method of study is to break the passage up into parts. What do you observe of Daniel's attitude in the opening of his confession?

3) So I gave my face to the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.

4) And I prayed to Yahweh my God and confessed and said, "Alas, O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and lovingkindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments, (Dan 9:3-4, LSB)

Ask the student: what is the significance of fasting, sackcloth, and ashes? Consider using a Bible dictionary: 1) search "studylight holman," 2) select "Holman Bible Dictionary," 3) locate "sackcloth."

A garment of coarse material fashioned from goat or camel hair worn as a sign of mourning or anguish, also marked by fasting and sitting on an ash heap (Isaiah 58:5). Jonah 3:8 notes even animals mourned in sackcloth. The shape of the garment could have been either a loose-fitting sack placed over the shoulders or a loin cloth.

By fasting, wearing a sackcloth, and sitting on ashes, Daniel is mourning and deeply saddened by the nation's sins and what the judgment it has wrought.

Ask the student: does Daniel open his confession with a petition?

Note carefully that Daniel opens his prayer by praising, not asking, God:

O Lord, the great and awesome God

who keeps His covenant and lovingkindness for those who love Him

2. What do you observe of Daniel's acknowledgment of sin?

5) **we** have sinned and committed iniquity and **acted wickedly and rebelled**, even **turning aside from Your commandments and judgments**.

6) Moreover, **we have not listened to Your slaves the prophets**, who spoke in Your name to our kings, our princes, our fathers, and all the people of the land. (Dan 9:5-6, LSB)

Ask the student: what and whose sins is Daniel acknowledging? Circle your observations.

1. We have acted wickedly and rebelled.

2. We have turned aside from your commandments and judgments.

3. We have not listened to your prophets.

3. What do you observe of Daniel's characterization of God's judgment?

7) "To You, O Lord, belongs **righteousness**, but to us *open shame*, as it is this day—to the men of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and all Israel, those who are nearby and those who are far away in all the countries to which You have banished them, because of their unfaithful deeds which they have committed against You.

8) O Yahweh, to us belongs *open shame*, to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, because we have sinned against You. 9) To the Lord our God belong **compassion and forgiveness**, for we have rebelled against Him; 10) nor have we listened to the voice of Yahweh our God, to walk in His laws which He put before us through His slaves the prophets.

11) Indeed all Israel has trespassed against Your law, even turning aside, not listening to Your voice; so the curse has been poured out on us, along with the oath which is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, for we have sinned against Him. (Dan 9:7-11, LSB)

Ask the student: what does Daniel recognize of God's judgment? Circle your observations. Would you think that way?

God's judgment is righteous, compassionate, and forgiving.

Ask the student: what is God's judgment? Circle your observations.

Banishment and the curse promised in the Mosaic Covenant is being applied to the nation.

Ask the student: why the open shame?

The people of God, representing the living God, are being punished by God. The nation is an embarrassment of God.

4. What do you observe of Daniel's understanding of God and the people of God? What does Daniel acknowledge? Circle your observations.

12) Thus **He has established His words which He had spoken against us** and against our judges who judged us, to bring on us great calamity; for under the whole heaven **there has not been done anything like what was done to Jerusalem**. 13) **As it is written in the law of Moses**, all this calamity has come on us; yet we have not entreated the favor of Yahweh our God by turning from our iniquity and acting wisely in Your truth. 14) Therefore Yahweh has watched over the calamity and brought it on us; for **Yahweh our God is righteous with respect to all His deeds which He has done**, but we have not listened to His voice. 15) "So now, **O Lord our God, who have brought Your people out of the land of Egypt with a strong hand and have made a name for Yourself**, as it is this day—we have sinned; we have acted wickedly. (Dan 9:12-15, LSB)

Encourage the student to mark up the text. What statements are made about God? What statements are made about the nation of Israel. Help the student focus their observations to make sense of the text. Here is an example of how observations aid in interpretation.

Observations:

"He has established His words which He had spoken against us"

"there has not been done anything like what was done to Jerusalem"

"As it is written in the law of Moses"

"Yahweh our God is righteous with respect to all His deeds which He has done"

"O Lord our God, who have brought Your people out of the land of Egypt with a strong hand and have made a name for Yourself"

Interpretation:

These statements are about the conditional Mosaic Covenant that God established, which told the nation what acts would bring blessing and what acts would bring curses. The loss of Jerusalem highlights the depth of the nation's sin and failure to uphold their covenant commitment. Note that Daniel acknowledges the righteousness of God's judgment of the nation.

Observations:

"yet we have not entreated the favor of Yahweh our God by turning from our iniquity and acting wisely in Your truth"

"but we have not listened to His voice"

"we have sinned; we have acted wickedly"

Interpretation:

Daniel acknowledges the nation's sin of not listening and acting wickedly by not turning from sin nor acting wisely in God's word.

5. What do you observe of Daniel's petitions as a man at least 80 years old? What is his attitude?

16) **O Lord, in accordance with all Your righteousness, let now Your anger and Your wrath turn away from Your city Jerusalem**, Your holy mountain; for because of our sins and the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people have become a reproach to all those around us.

17) **So now, our God, listen to the prayer of Your slave and to his supplications, and for Your sake**, O Lord, let Your face shine on Your desolate sanctuary.

18) **O my God, incline Your ear and listen! Open Your eyes and see our desolations and the city which is called by Your name**; for we are not presenting our supplications before You on account of any righteousness of our own, but on account of Your abundant compassion.

19) **O Lord, listen! O Lord, forgive!** O Lord, give heed and take action! For Your own sake, O my God, do not delay, because Your city and Your people are called by Your name.” (Dan 9:16-19, LSB)

Ask the student: circle the petitions that Daniel makes. Do you see a progression?

Observations:

“O Lord, in accordance with all Your righteousness, let now Your anger and Your wrath turn away from Your city Jerusalem”

“So now, our God, listen to the prayer of Your slave and to his supplications, and for Your sake”

“O my God, incline Your ear and listen! Open Your eyes and see our desolations and the city which is called by Your name”

“O Lord, listen! O Lord, forgive!”

Ask the student: what reasons does Daniel give? Do you understand all the words used? Is there a progression?

Observations:

“Jerusalem and Your people have become a reproach to all those around us”

“O Lord, let Your face shine on Your desolate sanctuary”

“we are not presenting our supplications before You on account of any righteousness of our own, but on account of Your abundant compassion”

“O my God, do not delay, because Your city and Your people are called by Your name”

Daniel confesses the sins of his people, humbles himself under God’s judgment, confesses that God is right and prays that God would show mercy.

Genuine confession of sin is the recognition of the error of one’s sin against the holiness of God. The genuine change of mind, repentance, to obey God’s way, which provides the relief from God’s judgment.

Confessing is intertwined with the acknowledgment of sin and praise / thanks for God’s majesty and power. It reflects in part the idea that the privilege of confessing a sin in seeking forgiveness from a Holy God is in itself something worthy of praising.

Take a look at what you did today. Look up Daniel 9:3-19 and see how much Scripture you tackled!!