

Daniel 9:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee.

Analysis

Daniel's prayer acknowledges comprehensive shame: 'O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee.' The Hebrew *בָּשָׂת פָּנִים* (boshet panim, shame/confusion of face) depicts humiliation and disgrace. Daniel includes all levels of society—kings, princes, fathers (ancestors)—recognizing corporate guilt spanning generations. The cause is stated simply: 'because we have sinned against thee.' No excuse, no blame-shifting, no minimizing—just honest acknowledgment of sin as the root cause of Israel's exile. This models proper confession: comprehensive (including all parties), honest (admitting fault), and God-centered (recognizing sin as offense against God, not merely misfortune). Reformed theology emphasizes confession's necessity: genuine repentance requires acknowledging sin's gravity and our culpability without excuse.

Historical Context

Daniel prayed this around 538 BC, near the end of the 70-year exile Jeremiah prophesied (Jeremiah 25:11-12, 29:10). He had read Jeremiah's prophecy (Daniel 9:2) and understood the exile's approaching end, prompting intercession. The 'confusion of face' referred to Israel's current state—Jerusalem destroyed, temple in ruins, people scattered. Yet Daniel acknowledges this came not through divine caprice but just response to covenant violation. Israel's history showed repeated rebellion: idolatry, injustice, ignoring prophets, breaking God's commands. The

exile wasn't arbitrary but covenantal curse (Leviticus 26, Deuteronomy 28-30). Daniel's prayer shows mature spirituality: understanding God's justice in judgment while pleading for mercy.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does Daniel's comprehensive confession (kings, princes, fathers) model corporate rather than merely individual repentance?
2. What does the phrase 'confusion of face' teach about sin's natural consequence being shame and humiliation?
3. Why is acknowledging causation ('because we have sinned') crucial to genuine confession?

Interlinear Text

לְשָׁנָה יְנוּ	לְמַלְכֵיכֶם יְנוּ	בְּשִׁתְּךָ יְמֵיכֶם	לְפָנֵיכֶם יְמֵיכֶם	אָדָן יְנוּ
O Lord	H0	to us belongeth	confusion	of face
H136		H1322	H6440	H4428

לְאָבָתֵיכֶם יְנוּ	אָשָׁר	בְּאָנוּ	לְאָבָתֵךְ יְנוּ	לְךָ:
and to our fathers	H834	because we have sinned	H2398	H0

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 14:20 (Sin): We acknowledge, O LORD, our wickedness, and the iniquity of our fathers: for we have sinned against thee.

Lamentations 1:18 (References Lord): The LORD is righteous; for I have rebelled against his commandment: hear, I pray you, all people, and behold my sorrow: my virgins and my young men are gone into captivity.

Lamentations 3:42 (Parallel theme): We have transgressed and have rebelled: thou hast not pardoned.

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