

# Ezra 9:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

O LORD God of Israel, thou art righteous: for we remain yet escaped, as it is this day: behold, we are before thee in our trespasses: for we cannot stand before thee because of this.

## Analysis

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Ezra concludes his prayer with confession of God's righteousness: 'O LORD God of Israel, thou art righteous.' This acknowledgment is crucial—even while appealing for mercy, Ezra affirms God's just character. The phrase 'we remain yet escaped, as it is this day' emphasizes that their continued existence is grace, not entitlement. The corporate confession 'behold, we are before thee in our trespasses' pictures standing in God's presence as guilty defendants. The final acknowledgment 'we cannot stand before thee because of this' uses legal terminology—they have no case, no defense, no righteousness to plead. This is thoroughly Reformed theology: total inability, complete guilt before holy God, and appeal to mercy alone. Ezra doesn't bargain or make excuses—he simply confesses truth and throws the community on God's mercy.

## Historical Context

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Ezra's prayer contains no petition—only confession and acknowledgment of God's character. This is striking compared to typical ancient Near Eastern prayers that petition and negotiate with deities. Ezra's approach reflects biblical theology that genuine repentance precedes petition. The prayer's public nature (Ezra 10:1 describes 'very great congregation' weeping with him) created crisis that led to corporate repentance. The absence of explicit petition also demonstrates that Ezra trusted God to respond appropriately to genuine confession—he didn't need to tell God what to do. This prayer became a model for later Jewish penitential prayers.

## Related Passages

## 1 John 4:8 — God is love

## 1 Corinthians 13:4 – Characteristics of love

## Study Questions

1. How does confessing God's righteousness while acknowledging personal guilt demonstrate proper theology and spirituality?
2. What role does recognition of total inability and guilt play in genuine repentance?
3. In what ways can church leaders model prayer that emphasizes confession and God's character over petition and demands?

## Interlinear Text

בָּשָׂא	רָנוֹ	קִ	אָ	פָּה	צָדִיק	יִשְׂרָאֵל	אֱלֹהִים	יְהֹוָה	וְ
<b>O LORD</b>	<b>God</b>	<b>of Israel</b>	<b>thou art righteous</b>		H859	H3588	<b>for we remain</b>		
H3068	H430	H3478	H6662					H7604	

זאתן על לפני יב בעם ודי א ז כ י H3588 H369 for we cannot stand before H5921 H2063 H5975 H6440

## Additional Cross-References

**Psalms 130:3** (References Lord): If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?

**John 8:24** (Parallel theme): I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.

**Romans 3:19** (References God): Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

**John 8:21** (Parallel theme): Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come.

**Romans 10:3** (Righteousness): For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

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