

# Daniel's confession on behalf of his people

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] Whom shall I fear? I know who goes before me, I know who stands behind The God of angel armies is always by my side The one who reigns forever, he is a friend of mine The God of angel armies is always by my side And nothing falls against me, shall stand You hold the whole world in your hands I'm holding all to your promises You are faithful, you are faithful

And nothing falls against me, shall stand You hold the whole world in your hands I'm holding all to your promises You are faithful, you are faithful, you are faithful I know who goes before me, I know who stands behind The God of angel armies is always by my side The one who reigns forever, he is a friend of mine The God of angel armies is always by my side

I know who goes before me, I know who stands behind The God of angel armies is always by my side The one who reigns forever, he is a friend of mine The God of angel armies is always by my side Welcome to Union Baptist Church today Welcome to Union Baptist Church today In the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior Special welcome today to everyone watching us on the live stream And also a really super special welcome To anyone who's visiting us for the first time You are very, very welcome here My name is Kathy McNeerney And I am the deacon for discipleship So today we're continuing with our sermon series On great prayers of the Bible

And we'll be looking at Daniel's prayer from Daniel 9 Today also marks the beginning of our week of prayer And we'll be hearing more about that in the service So let's begin our worship By reading together from Hebrews 4 Let's read this together Therefore, since we have a great high priest Who has ascended into heaven Jesus, the Son of God Let us hold firmly to the faith we profess For we do not have a high priest Who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses But we have one who has been tempted in every way Just as we are Yet he did not sin Let us then approach God's throne of grace With confidence So that we may receive mercy And find grace To help us in our time of need

Let's pray Father God We praise you That because of Jesus Christ Your Son's death and resurrection We all have access to the throne room of God Thank you for your invitation To confidently approach you And receive the mercy and grace Of Jesus Our living hope Who came and died for our sins To redeem us And restore us to the Father Lord, fill us with your spirit today May our worship glorify you As we continue by praying the prayer Jesus taught us Let's say this together Our Father Who art in heaven Hallowed be thy name Thy kingdom come Thy will be done On earth As it is in heaven Give us this day Our daily bread And forgive us our trespasses

[ 5 : 1 0 ] As we forgive those Who trespass against us And lead us not into temptation But deliver us from evil For thine is the kingdom The power And the glory Forever and ever Amen Please stand We're going to sing And praise God As we give him all the glory To God be the glory Great things he hath done So loved he the world That he gave us his Son Who yielded his life An atonement for sin And opened the life gate

That all may go in Praise the Lord Praise the Lord Let the earth hear his voice Praise the Lord Praise the Lord Let the people rejoice O come to the Father Through Jesus the Son And give him the glory Great things he hath done O perfect redemption The purchase of blood To every believer The promise of God The vilest offender Who truly believes That moment from Jesus A pardon receives

Praise the Lord Praise the Lord Let the earth hear his voice Praise the Lord Praise the Lord Let the people rejoice O come to the Father Through Jesus the Son And give him the glory Great things he hath done Great things he hath taught us Great things he hath done And great our rejoicing Through Jesus the Son But purer and higher And greater will be A wonder our actual When Jesus we see Praise the Lord Praise the Lord

Let the earth hear his voice Praise the Lord Praise the Lord Let the people rejoice O come to the Father Through Jesus the Son And give him the glory Great things he hath done Let's pray O Lord Our most holy and gracious Father Filled with mercy And steadfast love We are embarrassed to come before you For we have preferred the ways of the world This world to your ways For we have rebelled against your wisdom And we have got into trouble For we have rejected your fatherly guidance And have got lost altogether Gracious and merciful Father Incline your ear to our troubles Hear us when we pour out our sorrows before you

Forgive us Not on the ground of our own righteousness But on the ground of your great mercy And the gift of your Son Jesus Christ It is in his name that we pray For he is our Savior And the mediator of the new covenant of grace Father we thank you for your word Which assures us of your forgiveness and our pardon You say Because Jesus lives forever He has a permanent priesthood Therefore he is able to save completely Those who come to God through him Because he always lives to intercede for them Thank you Lord Amen We just sang about Christ's perfect redemption And being purchased by his blood Let's praise him as our rock and our redeemer O Lord

[10:17] My rock and my redeemer Greatest treasure of my longing soul My God Like you there is no other True delight Is found in you All alone Your grace A well too deep To fathom Your love Exceeds the heavens Reach Your truth A fount Of perfect wisdom My highest good And my unending need O Lord

My rock and my redeemer Strong defender Strong defender Of my weary heart My sword To fight the cruel deceiver And my shield Against his hateful guts My sword When enemies surround me My hope when tides of sorrow rise My joy when trials are abounding Your faithfulness my refuge in the night O Lord, my rock and my redeemer

Gracious saviour of my ruined life My guilt and cross laid on your shoulders In my place you suffered, bled and died You rose, the grave and death are conquered You broke my bonds of sin and shame You rose, the grave and death are conquered You broke my bonds of sin and shame O Lord, my rock and my redeemer May all my days bring glory to your name

May all my days bring glory to your name So now we're going to sing a song which has some signing to it and I think I have some trusty helpers who are going to come and support We're going to sing it all the way through It's For God So Loved the World I think it's well known to all of us We're going to sing it all the way through together and then we'll split into parts We'll get the signing first Okay, thank you For God So Loved the World For God So Loved the World He gave his only Son And whoever believes in him Shall not die but have eternal life Hell is for the love that he has for me I am the reason he died on the tree F is for forgiveness and now I am free He is to enjoy being in his company Okay, if you find singing and signing too difficult to do together Yeah My little friend here does So she's just going to sing So you choose whether you're going to sing or sign, that's fine I'm going to come over here So this half, we're going to start So we'll start singing And then Ruth will show you when to come in And Dawn and Bethany are the people to follow for signing there We'll sing it two and a little bit times through And let's sing praise to God

[15:38] Because God did love the world And he did send his only Son for us For God So Loved the World He gave his only Son And whoever believes in him Shall not die but have eternal life For God So Loved the World He gave his only Son To whatever he has for me And to ever believe in him Shall not die but have eternal life Kind of die but have eternal life More or love of love that he has for me I gave his only Son Into eburpt his only Son And to ever believe in her Bush I gave his only Son And to ever believe in him eternal life shall not die but have eternal life for God so loved the world he gave his only son and to ever believe in him shall not die but have eternal life yes this church can sing please be seated so as I said earlier this today marks the beginning of our week of prayer and more than ever we need to spend time in prayer to cry out to God for our nation to call on God to strengthen our church and to listen to what God is telling his church in this challenging time if you haven't signed up yet we encourage you to sign up to spend one or more hours of prayer during this week we have a couple of useful prayer guides that you can use one is in print you can find it on the table up here the other is on the website both of them are on the website actually on the week of prayer page so you can still sign up either on the website or we're going to

I'll be in the information room at the table to sign you up after the service with my husband John so you can sign up to pray individually you can sign up to pray in pairs and triplets in groups groups like a family so kids have your parents signed you up to pray as a family yet raise your hands if you're praying this week yay yay we encourage parents to sign up your families we have some

great resources on the website which Dawn and Salome have helped with we've got a family prayer guide I think we have some copies of that here some print copies but it's also on the week of prayer page on the website there are there's a list of excellent books on family prayer and helping your children understand what it means to pray and there are also some excellent websites on family prayer so we encourage you to take a look at that there are also on our book stall there's some children's books on prayer as well as some new books that have just come out on prayer for adults and some older some older books that people have found very useful so some of us might find it really hard to find an hour in our busy weeks to pray

Jesus showed us that prayer is often inconvenient and costly so we encourage you to look at the way you spend your time and maybe skip a meal to pray or take an hour when you normally watch TV and pray or an hour of your screen time or an hour of leisure time and pray once you've decided that you're going to do this you can think about all the different ways that you can pray there's so many different ways you can pray you could in addition to using one of the prayer guides at home you can also maybe go for a prayer walk for an hour you could come into the prayer room at the church Hannah's done an excellent job setting up the prayer room and there are seven or eight different stations where it would be very easy to spend one hour praying so we encourage you to use that prayer it's a prayer room it's open from nine to five during the week or if you are a woman why not try one of our women's prayer groups they are twice we meet twice a week one is during the day on Mondays at 1pm and the other one is Thursday evenings at 7.30pm they last exactly one hour and they're on Zoom so it's very convenient so if you need the Zoom link if you'd like to try it please it's for all the it's open to all the women in the church please come and try it and see if it's something you'd like to do more regularly we meet weekly and not forgetting the men there is a men's prayer breakfast falling on this

Saturday at 8 o'clock at church men why not try it if you haven't been to it before so there are many ways many different options to find ways to pray this week but the sure thing is that we need to seek to go deeper with God in prayer and as we do that God will transform us and in turn transform our community so please join us as we go on this prayer adventure together and it's very exciting what God might well God will do he's promised that he will answer our prayers what he will do this week so our children and youth are going to leave now but first we're going to pray for them let's pray thank you Lord for our young people and our children we pray that you bless them in their groups today that they would feel your love for them and understand your truth please work your spirit in them so that each of them will become men and women after your own heart we pray for the group leaders we lift them up to you fill them with your love your wisdom your kindness and compassion for these precious children and young people thank you for their service to you and to your church in Jesus name amen okay the children and young people can go to their groups now ■■■ham and

Thank you.

[ 24 : 18 ] Good morning. This is the start of our week of prayer, and I wanted to use our intercessions to encourage us.

I had a strong sense of the word peace in my preparation for prayer, and I came upon several Bible verses. I want to share just a few with you before we get into prayer, because I think if we come to prayer in peace, we can hear what God is saying.

So now I bless you with his words. From John 14, 27, this is what Jesus said. Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you.

I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not be afraid. And Philippians 4, verses 6 to 7 says, Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

[ 25 : 49 ] Let us pray. Father, we place our thoughts and concerns at your feet now.

Loving Father God, to you only belongs honor and glory. We praise your holy name for who you are and all your wondrous deeds.

Father, you know all things. No one can question any of your words. And no one can counsel you. You are God. You are love.

You are peace. Thank you for sending your son Jesus to save us. Even when we thought we didn't need you, you loved us so much that you would not leave us in our ignorance and wrongdoing.

Thank you that Jesus took the punishment that should have been ours. And now we can rejoice because we have been adopted as your sons and daughters.

[ 27 : 01 ] Thank you for sending us. Thank you for sending us. We thank you, Lord, that you sent your Holy Spirit to be with us and in us. Thank you that he gives us gifts for the good of your church and for enabling us to tell the good news.

Thank you that your Holy Spirit reveals your will to us and helps us to remember Jesus' teachings. Thank you that he comforts us in our times of distress, teaches us in our times of ignorance, and strengthens us in our weaknesses.

When we do not know what we should pray, Holy Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. As we commence our week of prayer, we recognize our total dependence upon you, Lord, and our great need for your spirit to lead us and pray with us and pray in us.

Please, abundantly bless our times in prayer and strengthen us individually and as your church while we commit to intentionally seek your will in prayer.

Give us endurance over this week, especially those who have taken late night and very early morning prayer slots. By your spirit, release thanks and praise as we cry out to you for the world, our nation, the town of High Wycombe, and Union Baptist.

[ 28 : 41 ] Speak to us by your spirit, Lord. We want to hear from you. As we meet on January 22nd, the close of our week of prayer, for the New Year Fellowship Lunch and Open Church Meeting, give us a sense of joy and togetherness.

Unite us by your spirit as we receive the update on living stones. We ask for healing of minds, bodies, and spirits for those known to us who need your loving touch.

Meet their needs, Lord. Comfort those who have lost loved ones and surround them with the support that they need. And now, Father, as we prepare to listen to your words, we ask for your blessing upon Hannah and the words she will read.

May each pause and inflection in her voice convey the message that you wish us to hear. Open our ears and give us teachable hearts, Lord.

Thank you for inspiring Andrew as he prepared the sermon. Bless him as he speaks your truths to us now. Empower each word he speaks by your spirit so that our thinking is renewed.

[ 30 : 12 ] Change us from the inside out, Lord, so that we can recognize your perfect will for us and quickly respond to it. Cause your word to bring out the best in us and form us more and more in the nature of Jesus.

We ask for these and other mercies in Jesus' precious name. Amen. Amen. Amen. So we'll be reading from the book of Daniel, chapter 9, 1 to 19, and it's on page 895 of the Pew Bibles if you want to follow along.

In the first year of Darius, son of Xerxes, a Mede by descent, who was made ruler over Babylon, over the Babylon kingdom in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, understood from the scriptures, according to the word of the Lord given to Jeremiah the prophet, that the desolation of Jerusalem would last 70 years.

So I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and petition, in fasting and in sackcloth and ashes. 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 keeps his commandments, we have sinned and done wrong.

We have been wicked and have rebelled. We have turned away from your commands and laws.

We have not listened to your servants, the prophets, who spoke your name to our kings, our princes and our ancestors, and to all the people of the land.

[ 32 : 10 ] Lord, you are righteous, but this day we are covered in shame. The people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem and all Israel, both near and far, in all countries where you have scattered us because of our unfaithfulness to you, we and our kings, our princes, our ancestors, are covered with shame.

Lord, because we have sinned against you, the Lord our God is merciful and forgiving. Even though we have rebelled against him, we have not obeyed the Lord our God or kept the laws he gave us through his servants.

The prophets, all Israel has transgressed your law and turned away, refusing to obey you.

Therefore, the curses and sworn judgments written in the law of Moses, the servant of God, have been poured out on us because we have sinned against you.

You have fulfilled the words spoken against us and against our rulers by bringing on us great disaster. Under the whole heaven, nothing has ever been done like what has been done to Jerusalem.

Just as it was written in the law of Moses, all this disaster has come on us, yet we have not sought the favor of the Lord our God by turning from our sins and giving attention to your truth.

[ 33 : 34 ] The Lord did not hesitate to bring the disaster on us, for the Lord our God is righteous in everything he does, yet we have not obeyed him. Now, Lord our God, who brought your people out of Egypt with a mighty hand and who made for yourself a name that endures to this day.

We have sinned. We have done wrong. Lord, in keeping with all your righteous acts, turn away your anger and your wrath from Jerusalem, your city, your holy hill.

Our sins and the iniquities of our ancestors have made Jerusalem and your people an object of scorn to all those around us. Now, our God, hear the prayers and petitions of your servant.

For your sake, Lord, look with favor on your desolate sanctuary. Give ear, our God, and hear. Open your eyes and see the desolation of the city that bears your name.

We do not make requests of you because we are righteous, but because of your great mercy. Lord, listen. Lord, forgive. Lord, hear and act.

[ 34 : 42 ] For your sake, my God, do not delay because your city and your people bear your name. This is the word of the Lord. Well, thank you so much, Hannah.

Good morning, everyone. My name's Andrew, for those that don't know me, and it's great to be sharing with you this morning. We're continuing our series on great prayers of the Bible.

Last week, Malcolm took us through the prayer of King Hezekiah that he prayed in the face of some really worrying threats from his enemies. And following that, we had a wonderful time of response in our service, rededicating ourselves to the Lord for the year ahead.

And I really sensed God at work as we spent time being prayed for by some of our elders and deacons of the church. Today, we're looking at this prayer from Daniel chapter 9.

Now, when it comes to Daniel, most of us are very familiar with Daniel chapters 1 to 6. Those are the chapters that make it into children's Bibles, the bit about Daniel in the lion's den and the writing on the wall and the fiery furnace.

[ 35 : 52 ] Chapters 7 to 12 of Daniel don't tend to make it into children's Bibles. These chapters record a number of visions of the future that Daniel received. Now, some of the visions are a bit wacky and some are not easy to understand.

But we also have this brilliant prayer in chapter 9 which I think is very relevant for us today and I believe that God wants to speak to us through this prayer today.

It would be really helpful if you can have your Bible open at Daniel chapter 9. It's around page 894. Mine might be slightly different but we'll look at this together, Daniel chapter 9. Now, verse 1 of Daniel chapter 9 gives us the historical context.

It was the first year of the reign of Darius who was a Mede who took over from the kingdom of Babylon. Now, if we rewind back to the start of the book of Daniel, the Babylonian empire had taken over Jerusalem and plundered the city and its temple and taken away a large number of the population into exile in Babylon.

And Daniel was among those first exiles who went into Babylon but he was selected, chosen, he rose to a position of authority in the Babylonian empire. But now, there's a change in power.

[ 37 : 07 ] The Babylonians are defeated at the hands of the Medes and the Persians and that raises questions and glimmers of hope among the Israelite people that their time of exile may soon be over.

So, Daniel goes to the best place to get answers to the questions being asked around him. He turns to the scriptures. He reads the writings of Jeremiah the prophet. Now, Jeremiah had foretold the Babylonian invasion and the exile.

Now, it may well be that Daniel actually remembered seeing Jeremiah, hearing some of his prophecies as he would have been a young boy at the time that Jeremiah brought God's message to Jerusalem.

And Daniel, at this point, would have turned to Jeremiah chapter 25, verse 4 to 11, in which God tells his people that they haven't been listening to him. They've been worshipping other gods.

They've gone against him. And therefore, God says, the Babylonians will come against the land and the people from Judah will serve the king of Babylon for 70 years. And then I think Daniel went on a

little bit further ahead to chapter 29 of Jeremiah.

[ 38 : 11 ] Chapter 29, verse 10, it says, this is what the Lord says, when 70 years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfil my good promise to bring you back to this place.

So Daniel read God's word and in Daniel chapter 9, verse 2, he was able to say, I, Daniel, understood from the scriptures according to the word of the Lord given to Jeremiah the prophet that the desolation of Jerusalem would last 70 years.

And he realises it's been about 70 years since the exile, so he turns to prayer in response. Now I want to pick out four aspects of Daniel's prayer that can guide us when we pray to God and I think, I believe that this is going to be helpful for us as we approach this week of prayer to guide us in our prayers.

The first thing is that it's prompted by his word. There's a direct link between reading the Bible and turning to prayer and I hope that you've experienced that, that reading the Bible prompts you to pray.

As we read and explain the Bible here in our service, it prompts us to pray as we did in a special way last week. And I hope that we'll experience that this week. That in our week of prayer as we set aside time to pray, as we make extra time to pray, as we use the guide provided and use prompts in the prayer room up there, that the Bible will prompt us to pray.

[ 39 : 33 ] It can prompt us to pray in different ways. We might read encouraging truth about God and turn that into a prayer of praise to him. We might read a command to us or a section about how God wants us to live and as we compare that to our own life, we realise that we fall short.

So we turn that to a prayer of confession and a prayer of asking God to help us live the way that he wants us to. Well, Daniel is prompted by what he reads in Jeremiah and he turns to prayer in verse 3.

He turns to God, it says, in some translations it says, I turn my face to God. It's funny the things you hear yourself saying to your children that your parents used to say to you.

So, look at me when you're talking to me is something I've often heard from my parents and now I find myself telling my own children that because as adults we recognise the importance of showing that we're giving our full attention to the one that we're talking to.

It's being intentional and it's being respectful. Daniel's not having half a conversation with God while he works on his laptop or while he scrolls on his phone or maybe while he scrolls on his scroll.

[ 40 : 42 ] But I hope for, one of my hopes for this week of prayer is that I can turn some of my half conversations with God into fully attentive deep times with him.

So Daniel turns his face to God. He gives God his full attention and what else does he do? It says in verse 3 he pleads with him in prayer and petition and in fasting.

Now fasting is something that we can do when we really want to earnestly seek God and it means we divert attention away from things that we need or that our bodies think we need in order to give more attention to him and we hold back from things that satisfy or seem to satisfy our daily needs in order to focus on the one who can satisfy us completely.

Now if you've not tried fasting and if you don't have a medical reason not to I would really encourage you to try it this week. Miss one meal and spend the time that you would have spent preparing that meal and eating it in prayer.

It won't be easy but it will be worthwhile. My own limited experience of fasting is that the times when God has given me most clarity of direction in my life have come out of times of fasting regularly for one meal per week and spending that time in prayer and I encourage you to do that.

[ 42 : 03 ] Now Daniel we notice doesn't just fast he's wearing sackcloth and ashes. This is what people did in those times when they were deeply troubled when they were in mourning and when they were in distress. Daniel wasn't in mourning but this was an outward sign of his repentance and we'll come on to that.

Now the second point is that Daniel prays in response to the promise of his God. He prays into the promise that if his people turn back to him God will end the exile after 70 years.

But why does Daniel promise why does Daniel pray about something that God has already promised to do? Because if it's a promise then God's going to do it and Daniel could have just sat back and waited for God to act right?

Well I think this is part of the wonderful mystery of how God works. He is sovereign and he rules over everything and he knows what's going to happen and yet he responds to our prayers and our

prayers make a difference.

Our prayers are an important part of God working out his purposes. God in his sovereignty makes promises and he chooses the means by which to fulfil those promises and one of those means is by prayer.

[ 43 : 15 ] It's a bit like with young children we often know what they're going to tell us before they tell us but we don't turn them away when they come to talk to us and turn them to be quiet when they start talking because we love to hear from our children.

It deepens and enhances our relationship with them. Well Daniel prayed according to the principles of the Lord's prayer long before Jesus taught it to his disciples. His prayer here was like saying to God you've established your will in heaven by making this promise now may your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

He prayed into the pending promises of God. One writer said that Daniel behaved like a man with a check from heaven. I can't remember the last time I wrote a check but a check is a promise it's a promise to pay which isn't fulfilled until it gets cashed.

Now I was reminded this week of a little book and I've forgotten to bring it with me that I got given years ago and the book is called The Checkbook of the Bank of Faith and this is a book of daily devotions by Charles Spurgeon and it's shaped like a checkbook and it has a little leather cover like checkbooks used to have for each day it's got a promise from the Bible and I've been encouraged by that this week and a few people I've been with this week I've shared some of those promises with them.

It's really good to be reminded of the promises of God and reflect on those and to pray into them. Now kids are very good at reminding parents of their promises. Dad you promised us an ice cream at the end of this long walk.

[ 44 : 47 ] Dad you promised me a treat for working hard on this homework. Now as parents we have to be very careful what we promise because we know that we'll be held to it. Now we promised our children before we moved back to the UK from Africa that we would get a camper van.

That was before we realised how expensive they are. So we bought a very old and very rusty one but that's another story. But God doesn't need reminding of the promises he made. He knows he's made them but he invites us to pray into them.

Being familiar with the promises of God give shape and colour to our prayers. Somebody said that the promises of God are a mould into which we pour our prayers.

I quite like that idea. I remember at birthday parties when I was a kid we would always have jelly as part of the birthday tea and it would be kind of formed into a mould of some kind of animal. Was it a rabbit?

Imagine it was like a rabbit. It wasn't a giant rat was it? I kind of picture it like that. A mould of a rabbit. I think my prayers can be a bit like unformed jelly without the promises of God.

[ 45 : 52 ] They're a bit all over the place and a bit messy but they can take shape when I pray into the promises of God. Let's meditate on the promises of God this week in prayer.

Pray into those promises and allow the promises to mould our prayers. As we read God's promises we're prompted to call out to him to fulfil those promises.

By the way whatever happened to those jelly moulds? Anyone have a jelly mould like that? Oh one or two? Okay. Maybe we could have a jelly as part of our dessert for next week for our fellowship lunch to remind us of the promise of God.

Just a thought. Sorry I'm digressing. Daniel's prayer goes on in verse 4. 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.

Do you notice how he addresses God as Lord as Yahweh the awesome covenant God who keeps his covenant and we can address God as the covenant Lord who has made a new covenant of love with us through the death of Jesus.

[ 46 : 59 ] The next part is that Daniel acknowledges sin. He turns to confession verse 5 and here we see the reason he was wearing the sackcloth and the ashes.

Verse 5 we have sinned and done wrong. We have been wicked and have rebelled. We have turned away from your commands and laws. We have not listened to your servants the prophets. I don't know if you noticed when Daniel confesses he says we not he says we he doesn't say they.

Now from what I've read of Daniel I can find no evidence that he was wicked or that he was rebellious. He seems like a very faithful obedient follower of God. Yet he includes himself in a confession of the sin of God's people.

Because he knew that nobody is righteous before God including him. We can always find somebody worse than us. Somebody who's more of a sinner than we are. But we need to remember that as Paul said in Ephesians and also in Romans we can't boast.

We can't think we're better than others because we've all sinned. We all need saving. Just imagine the spiritual impacts it would have if all the time we spent thinking and talking about the wrongs of other people we spent on confessing the sin.

[ 48 : 12 ] Confessing that we have sinned against God and that includes myself. Daniel's confession is full and detailed and earnest and heartfelt. It's not just a token word of sorry for the wrong things I've done and now please can I have this, this and this.

Daniel is aware of how much his people's sin hurts God and he feels the hurt of that. He contrasts God's righteousness and mercy with the shame of the people in verse 9.

The Lord our God is merciful and forgiving even though we have rebelled against him. And he acknowledges that what's happened to his people has happened as a result of their sin in verse 11. Therefore the curses and sworn judgments written in the law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out on us because we have sinned against you.

After his comprehensive confession of sin Daniel appeals to God's mercy. He appeals to the God who saved his people from Egypt in verse 15. In verse 16 he appeals to God to turn his anger and his wrath away from them.

In verse 18 he says we do not make requests of you because we are righteous but because of your great mercy. As we read in verses 16 to 18 we see that Daniel isn't primarily concerned for the safety and comfort of his people and for them to get back to their home turf.

[ 49 : 29 ] His concern is for the reputation of God and he prays to God for his name to be exalted. Verse 16 says our sins and the iniquities of our ancestors have made Jerusalem and your people an object of scorn to all those around us.

Now our God hear the prayers and petitions of your servant. For your sake Lord look with favour on your desolate sanctuary. Give ear our God and hear. Open your eyes and see the desolation of the city that bears your name.

Now here's a picture of a building. Can anyone tell me what this building was called when it was first opened? When it was first opened? Yeah? The Millennium Dome. It's the Millennium Dome in Docklands.

Can anyone tell me what it's called now? Pardon? It's the O2. It's the O2 Arena. It's called the O2 Arena after the company that now owns it which is O2, the phone network.

Now can you imagine if you went to the O2 Arena for an event and you found it in a terrible state of disrepair? Lights flickering on and off, puddles of water where the roof was leaking, paint peeling off the walls, rubbish everywhere.

[ 50 : 38 ] What would that make you think about O2, the company? Well that would be a terrible thing for the reputation of O2. They would want to put those things right so as not to spoil their name or damage their reputation any further because it bears their name.

God has a reputation which is communicated through his people and through his temple in the Old Testament times. Daniel cries out to God in verse 19, do not delay because your city and your people bear your name.

He's saying, come and act Lord. Not for our sake, not because we feel humiliated and homesick, no he says, for your sake, come quickly because your city and your people bear your name.

God's reputation is bound up in the plights of his people. Now as we turn to prayer, we could cry out to God, Lord restore us, forgive us, cleanse us so that we can know your transforming power so that we can be transformed.

And that's not a bad thing to pray. But it's better to pray, Lord restore us, forgive us, cleanse us for the sake of your name so that your name may be glorified in us.

[ 51 : 49 ] We prayed, hallowed be your name in the Lord's prayer earlier. Your name is holy, your name be lifted up. But do we mean it? Do you long to see the name of God exalted in your life, in your family, in this church, in this town?

Do you care about the repute of the name of the Lord? This is a theme that runs through many of the great prayers of the Bible. We saw it in Hezekiah's prayer last week. He prayed, listen to this insult to you, the living God.

Deliver us so that all kingdoms on earth may know that you alone are God. He was concerned about the reputation of God. God, what would Daniel pray if he came to Union Baptist Church, if he came to High Wickham today?

I think he would cry out to God for mercy and forgiveness for the idolatry and disobedience of God's people that he sees here. I think he would be deeply disturbed that God's reputation has been damaged here in a number of ways.

I think he would want to pray with us to confess the ways we have discredited the name of God as a church. the many ways we have not carried out our mission. It's right here to be a community of Christians who love God, follow Jesus and share the hope we have with him.

[ 53 : 01 ] The ways we have not reflected God's character to those around us. Perhaps he would confess the ways that our tired building has not reflected the glory of God that we worship. We'll be reflecting more on that next week.

I think he would be deeply concerned that the name of the Lord be exalted in this place. We are to bear the name of Jesus in this town. How many people mention the name of Jesus in this town? The answer is very many but the majority of them are using it as a swear word. Does that bother you? It would have bothered Daniel very much.

Before we finish let's recap what Daniel teaches us about how to pray to God. We've had four things. The first one is the P prompted by your word.

As we spend time with God this week may we read his living word to us. May we go deeper into his word and let his word prompt our prayers so that the starting point of our prayers is about what God wants to say to us and not the other way around.

[ 54 : 05 ] The second thing is that respond to your promises God. Let's discover and rediscover God's promises to us within his word and let's pray into those promises and claim those promises and let's allow those promises to mould and shape our prayers.

The third thing is A. Acknowledge our sin. As we recognise our sin individual and corporates we should acknowledge it confess it and allow ourselves to feel the hurt of things which hurt and anger God.

But we appeal to his mercy and we know that he has the power to forgive because of Jesus making the new covenant with us through his death. We're going to be celebrating that as we come to the Lord's table a little bit later in our service.

fourthly we pray your name be exalted. Because God is the King of Kings. He is the name above all names and we as his church bear his name in this town with the other churches in this town.

So let's pray that as we love God, follow Jesus and share the hope we have with him, we will see High Wycombe transformed through a loving, serving, worshipping church which bears his name and his name will be glorified in this place.

[ 55 : 24 ] I can't think of a better thing to be praying this week. Let's turn to him in prayer now. Father God we thank you so much for your word.

We thank you for the way it prompts us to pray. We thank you for the promises to us in your word that we can hold on to and pray into. Lord when we read your word so often we recognise how far we fall short of what your word tells us.

We fall short of being the people that you want us to be. We are sorry for the way that we have sinned, for the way we've committed idolatry, for the way we've loved other things instead of you, for the way we've been disobedient to you.

We are sorry for tainting your name in the way we've acted, in not being the church you've called us to be, in not being a loving, serving, worshipping church, in not loving you, in not following Jesus, in not sharing the hope that we have in you.

We are sorry Lord. We want to see your name glorified. We want to see your name lifted up through us, as individuals, through us as a church.

[ 56 : 45 ] May we exalt your name. May we glorify your name. May we show other people who you are in this place, in this town. Glorify your name in us we pray.

Amen. I'm going to invite our musicians up today, now, and they're going to lead us in a song as we think about the worth and the glory of God, and we're going to lift his name up as we sing, Behold

Our God.

We exalt his name as we worship him. Let's stand and we're going to sing together. Who has held the oceans in his hands?

Who has numbered every grain of sand? Kings and nations tremble at his voice.

All creation rises to rejoice. Behold our God, seated on his throne.

[ 58 : 09 ] Come let us adore him. Behold our King, nothing can compare. Come let us adore him.

Come let us adore him. Come let us adore him. Who has given counsel to the Lord?

Who can question any of his words? Who can teach the one who knows all things?

Who can fathom all his wondrous deeds? Behold our God, seated on his throne.

Come let us adore him. Behold our King, nothing can compare. Come let us adore him.

[ 59 : 13 ] Come let us adore him. Come let us adore him. Come let us adore him.

Who has felt the nails upon his hands? has felt the nails upon his hands there in all the guilt of sinful man god eternal humble to the grave he's a savior risen now to reign behold you will reign Who will reign forever?

Who will reign forever? Behold our God, seated on his throne. Come let us adore him.

Behold our King, nothing can compare. Come let us adore him. Behold our God, seated on his throne.

Come let us adore him. Behold our King, nothing can compare.

[ 61 : 29 ] Come let us adore him. Come let us stand in silence for a moment.

Come let us adore him. Come let us adore him.

Come let us adore him.

Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Meet with us now around this table that Jesus welcomes us to. Amen. Amen.

Do take a seat and those helping to serve, do come out now. Amen. If you know the Lord Jesus, are walking in his ways, we invite you to enjoy this meal, to take bread and to take wine.

[ 62 : 53 ] If that's not where you are at the moment, then just watch as the elements are passed by and see how God speaks to you this morning. We are prompted by God's word to take this bread and this wine.

Jesus invites you to share this meal. So we are doing the pea that Andrew was, so to speak, that Andrew shared with us. We are responding to his promise that those who feed on him will live forever.

His bread, he feeds us from heaven. We are taking this meal because we know we need a saviour. We know we need the bread that springs up to eternal life.

That's why we come. And as we take bread and drink wine, Jesus says to you and to me, this is me.

As he took the bread and he took the wine, this is me. Receive me. And so as we receive him, anything good that we do, any gift that we have, we offer it all to him as our worship in the week ahead, in the weeks ahead, in the months ahead.

[ 64 : 16 ] I invite you to come to this table with humility and great thankfulness and love in your hearts. Jesus said to them, to you, to me, I am the bread of life.

Whoever comes to me will never be hungry. Whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. And he calls to those of us this morning that are weak and just not sure what the future is going to be like. He says, come to me, all you who are weary, who are carrying heavy burdens, and I'm going to give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

For my yoke is easy and my burden is light. Brothers and sisters, come to this table, not because you must, but because you may.

Not because you're strong, but because you know you're weak. Come not because of any goodness of your own gives you a right to come, but because you need mercy.

[ 65 : 27 ] You need help. Come because you love the Lord a little, but would love to love him more. Come because he loved you.

Come because he gave himself for you. Come as we share this meal and meet the risen Lord. For we, we are the body of Christ.

We are his body. A prayer. Let's bow our hearts. As Andrew was preaching, he talked about our need to acknowledge our sin.

We have prayed a prayer of confession, but perhaps the Lord has spoken afresh. Let's just pray. Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, from whom no secrets are hidden, cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name through Christ our Lord.

All God's people said. Amen. Amen. The Apostle Paul said this of this meal. The Apostle Paul tells us of the institution of the Lord's Supper, for I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that on the very night that Jesus was betrayed, he took a loaf of bread, and when he'd given thanks to his Father, he broke it and said, this is my body that is for you.

[ 67 : 10 ] Do this in remembrance of me. And in the same way, he took a cup after the supper, saying, this cup represents a new covenant sealed in my blood. Do this as often as you drink it in remembrance of me.

For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you're proclaiming the Lord's death until he comes again and we see him face to face.

Let's now give thanks for the bread and the wine. Father God, we thank you that we're able to share this meal together.

And Lord Jesus, we thank you so much for your amazing love for us in dying on the cross so that we could know that forgiveness, that bridging of that cavity, that barrier between us and your Father God.

Lord, we thank you so much for these elements that we're going to eat now. We thank you for the bread that represents your body broken, Lord Jesus, and the wine that represents your blood shed.

[ 68 : 18 ] And we do thank you so much. And we ask that you would bless it to us now. In Jesus' name. Amen. The very body of Jesus was broken for you.

As the bread is passed round. If you can take the bread and eat it personally as you receive it to show your personal response to Christ.

And then after the bread had been eaten, a cup was lifted up and Jesus said, I'm going to drink right to the bottom of this cup the wrath and judgment of God for you that you deserve.

So that we can drink a cup of thanksgiving. And after we've eaten the bread, the wine will be distributed. And when you receive it, just hold on to it and then we'll drink together.

And perhaps as we drink it this morning, we can remember the day when we'll drink it with all those who've gone before us in the eternal kingdom with great thanksgiving. So brothers and sisters, draw near with faith.

[ 69 : 37 ] Now let us receive the bread. If you are gluten intolerant, there's bread in this container. And I will ask after it's being distributed downstairs.

And if that's you, just put your hand up and I'll make sure that you get that. The body of Christ broken for you. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[ 71 : 53 ] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.

oh Jesus drank a cup that none of us would want to drink so that we could drink a cup of blessing. May the blood of Jesus cleanse you from every sin. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

[ 74 : 46 ] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

The blood of Christ wash you from every sin and may you anticipate that day when we'll drink this cup in the eternal kingdom. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Lord Jesus. That you held nothing back and gave us your very self.

Holy Spirit, fill us your people with your full presence, with your overflowing love and power. We so need you.

[ 77 : 16 ] We want to be the body of Christ in this world. We can't do it without your powerful presence working in us and through us.

So we invite you to fill us afresh with the living, loving presence of the Holy Spirit now. Just wait for a moment.

Thank you, Lord. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Guide us in prayer, Holy Spirit, this week. Lead us to the foot of the cross. Reveal to us the glory of the Father.

Hear our prayer. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Even if you're okay with us thank you. Thank you, Lord. Thank you. Thank you, Lord. Thank you, Lord.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. hear our prayer amen amen well just a couple of things before we sing our final song and Kathy then brings the blessing as you'll know next Sunday we're having an open church members meeting after a fellowship lunch which you're all invited to do make sure you've signed up to say you're coming so we've got plenty of food for you and at that open meeting we'll be sharing with you an update on the Living Stones project which is looking at the redevelopment of this sort of end of the church building much of it the church has been renovated but this part hasn't as yet we realize that for some people perhaps some of you you haven't really understood very much about the Living Stones project at all so at the very end of this service you're going to have the joy of watching a seven minute video that was produced by Joel Phillips do you remember him in November 2021

[ 79 : 05 ] Andrew and I the co-stars of this video we look so much older a year later we we videoed this and because of the increase in the pandemic in December January we chose not to show it last year but it seems fitting and right to show it now so if you notice carefully you'll realize it is a little dated but anyway that will be shown at the end of the service and don't forget if your visitors particularly we have tea and coffee up in the main hall just follow the crowds afterwards so can I invite you to turn your eyes upon Jesus as we come and worship him and with our final song this morning turn your eyes upon Jesus as we come and worship him and with our final song this morning we'll see you turn your eyes upon Jesus look full in his wonderful face and the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of his glory and grace turn your eyes to the hillside where justice and mercy embraced turn your eyes to the hillside where justice and mercy embraced where the Son of God gave his life for us and our measureless debt was erased

Jesus to you we lift our eyes Jesus our glory and our prize we adore you we lift our eyes to you we adore you behold you our saviour ever true oh Jesus we turn our eyes to you turn your eyes to the morning and see Christ the lion awake we adore you we lift our eyes to you we lift our eyes to you we lift our eyes to you a p■■■.

know them and know the■■■■ tree andils pray heads to you we lift our eyes to you we lift our eyes to you and remember i willie Lord Jesus the divineogan ■■■■ the day of the throne eyes to you we lift our eyes says they need anybody we lift our eyes to you skills that i needikt Genesis of your influence so many of us know the King so many of us and the things of us and our prayers and our prize.

We adore you, behold you, our saviour ever true. Oh Jesus, we turn our eyes to you.

Turn your eyes to the heavens. Our King will return for his own.

[ 82 : 45 ] Every knee will bow, every tongue will shout all glory to Jesus alone.

Jesus, to you we lift our eyes. Jesus, our glory and our prize.

We adore you, behold you, our saviour ever true. Oh Jesus, we turn our eyes to you.

Jesus, to you we lift our eyes. Jesus, our glory and our prize.

We adore you, we hold you, our saviour ever true. Oh Jesus, we turn our eyes to you.

[ 83 : 46 ] Oh Jesus, we turn our eyes to you. Please receive the blessing.

Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever.

Amen. Please be seated. So regarding Living Stones, there is a brochure if you're not familiar with the project that can be found at the entrance of the church.

Please feel free to pick up one of those. There's coffee upstairs and please don't forget to sign up for the week of prayer. I'm going to be in the information room waiting for you.

God bless you. We as a church are called to a vision.

[ 85 : 14 ] to see High Wycombe as a town transformed by God through his loving, serving and worshipping church. And the Living Stones project is a key part of taking that vision forward so that we can be a church that worships God, serves our community together.

Now, so much has been achieved already. We've got exciting and creative architect plans. We've appointed Beeks as our builder who built the hub in 2000.

And through your generosity, we have over a million pounds now given, pledged and in interest-free loans. So much has been achieved and we're now at a point where after two years of struggle, we need to make some important decisions which will shape this church for the next number of decades.

Now, before I go into the plans, I'd love to tell you a little bit or remind you a little bit about our church history.