

# Why Do So Many Christians Fail to Emulate Daniel?

by Jeremy James



There are many prayers in the Bible which, once we understand their context, can move us deeply. What is most striking about them is their candour. The supplicant submits completely to the sovereign will of God. Some of these prayers speak loudly to us today. There is one in particular which seems to jump off the page every time I read it. This is the prophet's prayer in chapter nine of Daniel [See **Appendix A**].

When we speak of the church today, we may be referring either to the lukewarm Laodicean church of Revelation 3:14 or to the assembly of all true believers embedded within it, namely the bride of Christ – Revelation 19:7. In this paper, when we refer to the church, we are speaking of all who profess to be Christian, both true and lukewarm.

Bear in mind that the faults and failings of the Laodicean church do not pertain to the bride. Her spiritual condition is given by Jesus in his description of the other six churches in chapters 2 and 3 of the Book of Revelation.

In chapter nine Daniel came before the LORD “**with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes.**”

As far as we can tell very few Christians fast today, even though Jesus implied that this ought to be part of our walk with God (“**Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance...**” – **Matthew 6:16**).

## Sackcloth and ashes

This is not the case with sackcloth and ashes. The first reference to sackcloth in Scripture may be found in Genesis 37:34, where Jacob rent his clothes and put sackcloth upon his loins (i.e. around his waist) when his sons reported that Joseph, his dearest child, was dead. Jamieson-Fausset-Brown explained the practise as follows:

**“Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins”** – the common signs of Oriental mourning. A rent is made in the skirt... according to the afflicted feelings of the mourner, and a coarse rough piece of black sackcloth or camel's hair cloth is wound around the waist.

Corn sacks were made from the same coarse material. It is believed that, on occasions of intense grief, the sackcloth was worn as an irritant next to the skin to express the mourner's anguish.



Ashes were also an expression of mourning in the case of Tamar, the daughter of king David, whose grief related, not to death, but to her brutal rape by Amnon and the loss of her virginity:

**“And Tamar put ashes on her head, and rent her garment of divers colours that was on her, and laid her hand on her head, and went on crying.” (2 Samuel 13:19)**

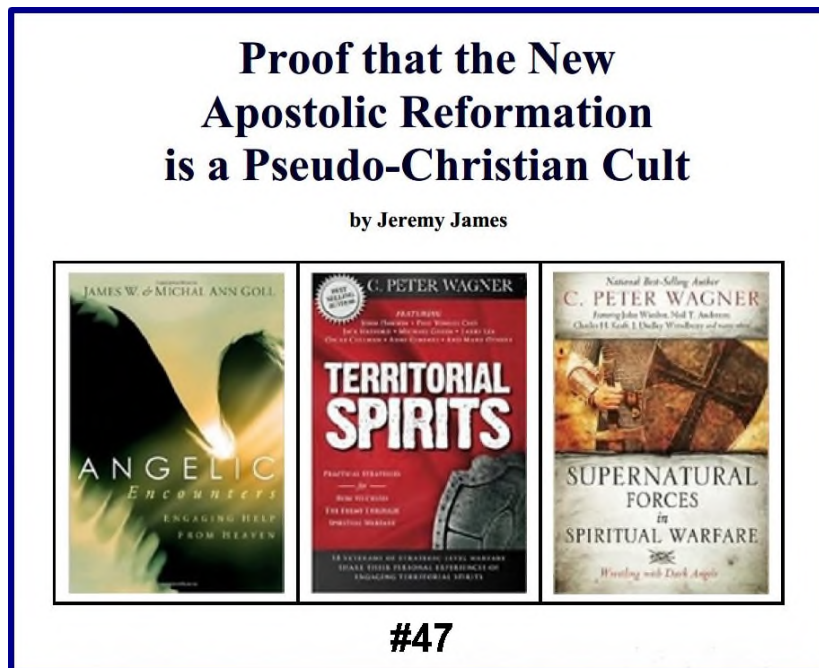
The “garment of divers colours” – which was worn by a virgin daughter of the king – was analogous to the “coat of many colours” that Joseph wore. In each case the crime, which was both vile and life-changing, was carried out by one or more members of the victim's family.

Grieving and repentance are connected. Consider the words of Jesus:

**“Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.” (Luke 10:13 and Matthew 11:21)**

Today the believer does not grieve or repent in sackcloth and ashes. Why? Because he has the Holy Spirit dwelling within him. Jesus has paid the price of his sin. The Lord has taken away his filthy garments and dressed him in pure white linen. To grieve in this way would be wholly inappropriate. By wearing sackcloth and ashes, he would be telling the world that he had lost what the Lord had given him and reverted to his former unregenerate state:

**“...What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.” (Acts 10:15)**



**The NAR, with its false gospel, is taking control – see below**

## **A broken and a contrite heart**

Mordecai was another person who mourned in sackcloth and ashes. Like the son for whom Jacob grieved, he too became the right hand of the king – Joseph ruled in the name of Pharaoh and Mordecai ruled in the name of Xerxes, king of the Persians. You may recall, too, that Daniel was *twice* promoted to a similar position, first under Belshazzar and then under Darius.

The Word of God is telling us that true repentance before God is prayer in its most startling and effectual form:

**“The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.” (Psalm 51:17)**

In this verse the words “sacrifices of God” mean the sacrifices that *we* make to God. A broken heart is a contrite heart, a repentant heart, a heart that has turned utterly from sin and from all that is displeasing to God. The verse is telling us that God will ALWAYS hear and respond to this prayer.

Lest we imagine that this commitment pertains only to those who have attained a high spiritual standing before God, the Bible includes instances of effectual repentant prayer by individuals whose lives were wracked by sin. Ahab, king of the northern kingdom, became entangled in his wife's Satanic schemes, which included the murder of Naboth in order to obtain his vineyard. The LORD sent the prophet Elijah to inform the king of His severe judgment. Both he and his wicked wife, Jezebel, would meet with a violent death and every one of their children, including their families, would be destroyed. Naturally Ahab was greatly shaken by this news:

**“And it came to pass, when Ahab heard those words, that he rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly.” (1 Kings 21:27)**

This was the same Ahab who **“did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the LORD”** (21:25) and **“did very abominably in following idols”** (21:26). He had married a high-level witch and indulged her every whim, a woman who had hunted down and slaughtered the prophets. That a man immersed in darkness should repent before the LORD in this way is remarkable.



He must have been sincere because the LORD heard him. Did he expect to be forgiven and have his sentence annulled? We cannot say for sure, but it would seem so. In any event the LORD did something which amazed me when, as a new believer, I first studied this passage:

**“And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days: but in his son's days will I bring the evil upon his house.” (1 Kings 21:28-29)**

Wow! We have here a man of great violence and depravity but he “humbled” himself before the LORD. As a newly saved person I was amazed to see that the LORD would grant him ANY favor – but He did. Ahab was spared the pain of hearing that a member of his family had died.

There are other instances where the LORD in His great mercy heard the plea of an individual whose conduct had been abominable. For much of his lengthy reign of 55 years, Manasseh, king of Judah, was a flagrant idolator, a man whose blasphemies were legendary. He offered children to Molech (“**shed innocent blood very much**” - **2 Kings 21:16**), engaged the services of wizards, astrologers and necromancers, and even erected pagan altars and a carved image in the Temple itself.



If it was possible to ascribe responsibility to one individual for the ultimate fall of Judah, a man whose wickedness finally pushed the kingdom over the edge, it was Manasseh:

**“And I will cause them to be removed into all kingdoms of the earth, because of Manasseh the son of Hezekiah king of Judah, for that which he did in Jerusalem.” (Jeremiah 15:4)**

**“Notwithstanding the LORD turned not from the fierceness of his great wrath, wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah, because of all the provocations that Manasseh had provoked him withal. (2 Kings 23:26)**

Toward the end of his long reign he did something to displease the king of Assyria and was imprisoned in Babylon. The affliction he endured there caused him to turn toward God and he “**humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, and prayed unto him**” (**2 Chronicles 33:12-13**). And He heard him! The LORD God “**heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom.**”

This wretched man, who had done so much to offend God, was not only released from prison but restored to his kingdom! He dropped his idolatry and gave his life to God for **“Manasseh knew that the LORD he was God.”**

### **Mercy that surpasses human understanding**

There is a mercy here that surpasses human understanding. When I hear talk about the God of the Old Testament, comparing Him to the God of the New Testament and implying that He was somehow different, I think of this passage. He never changes! He is eternally merciful, eternally willing to forgive.

As Psalm 136 says 26 times, **“For His mercy endureth forever”!**

Alas, mankind cannot see this. Even many believers seem to forget it:

**“Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and  
for his wonderful works to the children of men!”**

**(Psalm 107 – 4 times!)**

Manasseh finally arrived at the place where he knew **“that the LORD he was God.”**

It took Nebuchadnezzar seven years to arrive at the same place! He had to live as an animal, with the understanding of an animal, for all that time. But he got there, with God’s mercy. Perhaps he did not appreciate that God was being merciful while he grazed like an ox, day after day, in a state of utter humiliation. But all that changed the day he lifted his eyes up to heaven and blessed the Most High:

**“Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King  
of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment:  
and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.” (Daniel 4:37)**



The central theme in the Book of Ezekiel is virtually identical to this. Fallen and rebellious men must endure the judgment of God, often suffering immensely along the way, until that glorious hour when they realize **“that the LORD he [is] God.”**

Did you know that Ezekiel recorded the words “**ye [or *they*] shall know that I am the LORD**” no fewer than 51 times! Nowhere else in the Bible, with the exception of Psalm 136, do we find this remarkable degree of emphatic repetition. It is a message that the LORD wants us to take fully into our hearts and never allow anyone or anything to dilute its significance. Indeed, if we had to express the theme of the Bible in just one phrase, this would suffice.

## **Daniel’s Prayer**

We would appear to have travelled a long way from Daniel’s prayer, but this is not the case [See Chapter 9 of the Book of Daniel, verses 1-21, in **Appendix A.**]. It is not our aim in this paper to offer a commentary on his prayer. Rather, we want to show that it contains important features that are sorely neglected by the modern church.

In addition to fasting, which we have already noted, he does the following:

He describes his communication with God using three words – prayer, supplication, and confession.

He dwells on the shameful spiritual condition of his nation.

He offers no excuses for his nation’s failures.

He cites the code of conduct – the law of Moses – which applied unconditionally to all the children of Israel, a code which everyone ignored, neglected or violated.

He pleads with the LORD to survey the dreadful circumstances in which they now live as a result of their sins.

He seeks forgiveness on behalf of his nation even though they have no basis in righteousness to seek or merit His forgiveness.

He asks God to forgive his nation solely on the basis of His great mercy and for the sake of His great Name.

He refers over and over again to the sins, the iniquities, and the wickedness of his people, to their trespasses and rebellion.

He confesses his own sinfulness and never attempts to dissociate himself from his nation’s failings.



Here is a man whose prayer was grounded firmly in the eternal spiritual principal **“that the LORD he [is] God.”** We can approach Him only by acknowledging our own wretchedness and our utter dependence upon Him. Unfortunately this attitude or inner disposition is almost impossible to discern in the modern church.

### **Why the most exceptional man was no exception**

Is it possible to find in God’s Word a person more righteous than Daniel? The LORD cites him as an exemplar with few peers:

**“Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord GOD.” (Ezekiel 14:14)**

Both the great angel Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and another (unnamed) angel referred to Daniel as a man **“greatly beloved.”** His ministry, too, was exceptional, commencing around 605 BC and extending all the way to 536 BC or thereabouts. Yet, here he is, kneeling before God, confessing his sin.

We are told of few occasions where a prophet of God confessed his sin (though we would assume that all of them did). For example, David confessed his affair with Bathsheba and his role in the death of Uriah, while Jeremiah appeared to include himself in the sin of Israel: **“O LORD, though our iniquities testify against us, do thou it for thy name's sake: for our backslidings are many; we have sinned against thee.” (Jeremiah 14:7)**

A moving instance in the New Testament is that of Peter who **“wept bitterly”**. *His* sin was so shocking that Jesus referred to it later and asked Peter three times if he loved him.

It is often remarked that Daniel was primarily praying to God to forgive the sin of Israel – which is true – but how many preachers remind us that he was also confessing his own sin? -

**“We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly... And while I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel...”  
(Daniel 9:5 and 20)**

The Apostle Paul was very blunt about our fallen condition:

**“...Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.” (1 Timothy 1:15)**

**“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God”  
“As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:”  
(Romans 3:23 and 3:10).**

No, not one, not even Daniel.



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#331

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#389

The church today has a poorly developed sense of sin. Listening to some pastors one would think it underwent a complete transformation on Calvary and no longer has the power to offend God or harm man.

This is wrong! And more than wrong – it is heretical. Sin today is no less offensive to God than it was when He destroyed the cities of the plain. And it is no less leprous than when it caused Miriam to turn white.

What makes Daniel’s prayer so remarkable is that he includes himself among the sinners of Israel, among those whose transgressions led **“to the curse [that] is poured upon us” (v.11)**. He even says, **“We have sinned, we have done wickedly” (v.15)**

If we did not have a High Priest in heaven to intercede of our behalf, to say **“Put that on my account” (Philemon 1:18)**, we would likely be crushed by the Enemy.

We have referred several times in previous papers to the need to grieve over the evils that afflict this world, especially those which are enabled by unjust laws and institutional arrogance. But grief like this is seldom expressed and the need to grieve is seldom, if ever, acknowledged.

### **Let’s talk about this**

Some years ago I discussed this subject with a sincere believer who had come to Christ as a child. He was generally willing to express a reasoned opinion and tried as best he could to interpret worldly trends through the lens of Scripture. I had expected a thoughtful response but was taken aback when he simply said: “But the Word of God said that this is how it would be in the End Time.”

How would Daniel have replied? We can’t say for certain but, in light of his prayer and confession in chapter 9, I believe he would have given a very different answer. He may even have said, **“We have sinned, we have done wickedly.”**

During this age, the Age of Grace, the church is God’s witness on earth. This means it has been commissioned by Jesus to spread the Gospel. Millions of lost souls have no way of learning about the Gospel unless they are evangelized by the church.



A church that refuses to grieve is a very poor witness indeed. If we do not mourn the sinfulness of the world around us, then how can we recognize and cater to the dreadful spiritual condition of those who are still enslaved by sin? How can we witness to the lost? It hardly seems possible.

In the very last recorded communication between God and man before Jesus was born, the LORD spoke boldly in defense of those who feared Him, even to the extent of calling them “jewels”:

**“Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.”**

**(Malachi 3:16-17)**

Note in particular the words **“spake often one to another”**! If these jewels, the men and women who fear God, speak often “one to another” then they are reflecting on the spiritual condition of the world as seen through their Father’s eyes! They are trying to find ways to reach and convert those who have not found Christ. These “jewels” are the souls who take their commission seriously and pursue it earnestly, motivated by a common grief and guided by a common goal.

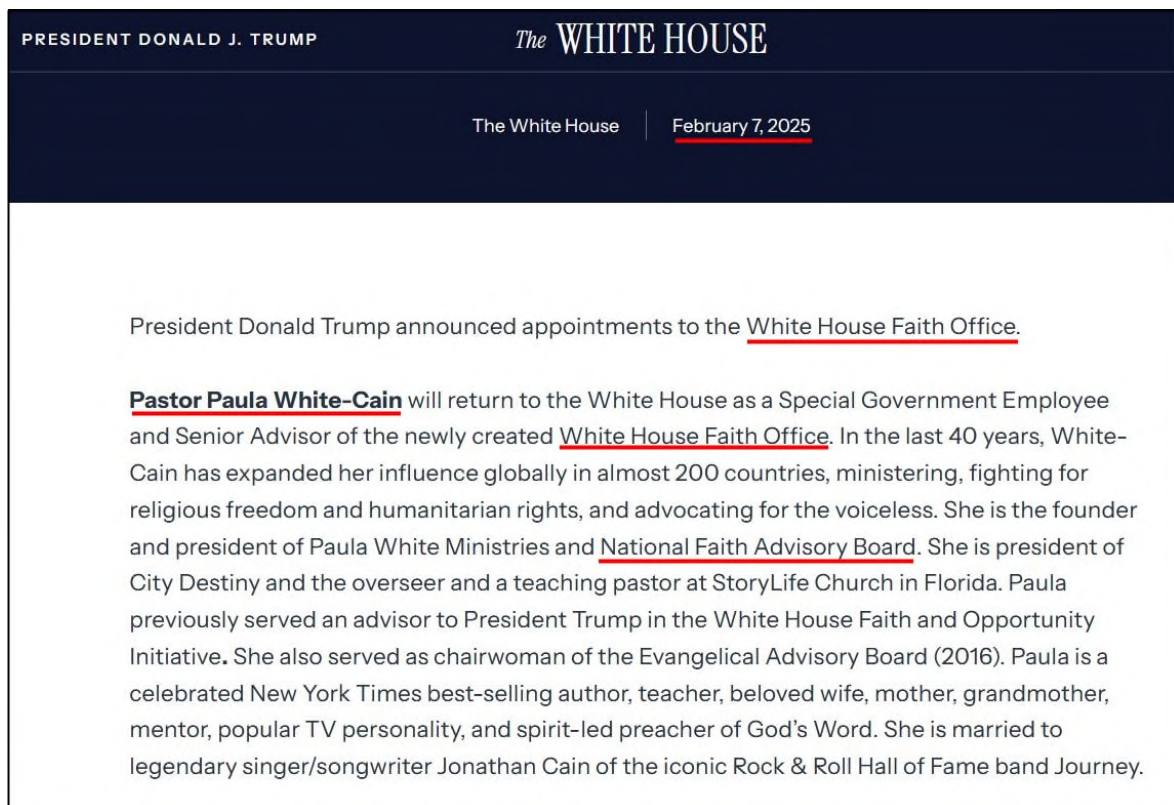
It is not enough to say, “But the Word of God said that this is how it would be in the End Time.” If we can see clearly the gross sinfulness and idolatry in the world around us then we should be talking “one to another” about it! We should reprove, rebuke and exhort our fellow believers with all longsuffering and doctrine (2 Timothy 4:2).

Alas, this is not happening. There is plenty of chirping and chattering in the modern church, but little or no heartfelt discussion about the world as God sees it. Without such discussion, the great commission lacks a firm foundation. In fact, it may have no foundation at all.



## CONCLUSION

The Enemy is trying to exploit this awful vacuum by creating a plausible institution of his own. This is the White House Faith Office which was announced by President Trump on 7 February 2025 – see below – to which he appointed Pastor Paula White-Cain as Senior Advisor. Its stated purpose is “to assist faith-based entities, community organizations, and houses of worship in their efforts to strengthen American families, promote work and self-sufficiency, and protect religious liberty”.



This may seem a laudable goal but when we dig a little deeper we find that it includes a mechanism which has been used many times in the past to capture and control independent groups:

“The executive branch wants faith-based entities, community organizations, and houses of worship, to the fullest extent permitted by law, to compete on a level playing field for grants, contracts, programs, and other Federal funding opportunities.”

Financial incentives enable the government to control organized religion and steer it in whatever direction it chooses. They are especially effective where the eligibility criteria make some ‘religious messages’ more acceptable than others. The churches which do as the government advises will be rewarded financially.



**Pastor Paula *White-Cane*  
– the blonde leading the blind.**

**As Christ said to the Laodicean church:**

**“...anoint thine eyes with eyesalve,  
that thou mayest see.”**

**– Revelation 3:18**

The person chosen to lead this federal faith initiative is not even a Christian. The teachings of Pastor Paula White-Cain are clearly derived, in part if not entirely, from the New Apostolic Reformation (NAR), a cult which we examined in detail in our paper, *Proof that the New Apostolic Reformation is a Pseudo-Christian Cult* [#47]. This woman is teaching another gospel!

**The official functions of the  
White House Faith Office include:**

- coordinate with all agencies to implement training and education throughout the country for faith-based entity grantees to build their capacity to procure grants;
- coordinate with agencies on identifying and promoting grant opportunities for non-profit faith-based entities, community organizations, and houses of worship, especially those inexperienced with public funding but that operate effective programs;
- identify and propose means to reduce burdens on the free exercise of religion, including legislative, regulatory, and other barriers to the full and active participation of faith-based entities, community organizations, and houses of worship in government-funded or government-conducted activities and programs.

**Source: The White House**

We have come a long way from a church which once knew how to grieve to one which now exults in prosperity, ecumenism and inclusiveness, where spiritual leadership is orchestrated at a federal level by an apostate government, and where the vast majority of those who profess to be Christian are largely insensible to the offense caused by sin to an awesomely Holy God.

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Ireland  
March 22, 2025**

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## APPENDIX A

### Daniel's Prayer – from Daniel, Chapter 9

[1] In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the seed of the Medes, which was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans;

[2] In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.

[3] And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplication, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes:

[4] And I prayed unto the LORD my God, and made my confession, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments;

[5] We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments:

[6] Neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets, which spake in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land.

[7] O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day; to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and unto all Israel, that are near, and that are far off, through all the countries whither thou hast driven them, because of their trespass that they have trespassed against thee.

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

[9] To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him;

[10] Neither have we obeyed the voice of the LORD our God, to walk in his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets.

[11] Yea, all Israel have transgressed thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy voice; therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, because we have sinned against him.

[12] And he hath confirmed his words, which he spake against us, and against our judges that judged us, by bringing upon us a great evil: for under the whole heaven hath not been done as hath been done upon Jerusalem.

[13] As it is written in the law of Moses, all this evil is come upon us: yet made we not our prayer before the LORD our God, that we might turn from our iniquities, and understand thy truth.

[14] Therefore hath the LORD watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us: for the LORD our God is righteous in all his works which he doeth: for we obeyed not his voice.

[15] And now, O Lord our God, that hast brought thy people forth out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and hast gotten thee renown, as at this day; we have sinned, we have done wickedly.

[16] O Lord, according to all thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from thy city Jerusalem, thy holy mountain: because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us.

[17] Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake.

[18] O my God, incline thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by thy name: for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies.

[19] O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people are called by thy name.

[20] And whiles I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God;

[21] Yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation.