

[Dn 9:4b-10](#)

“Lord, great and awesome God,
you who keep your merciful covenant toward those
who love you
and observe your commandments!
We have sinned, been wicked and done evil;
we have rebelled and departed from your
commandments and your laws.
We have not obeyed your servants the prophets,
who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes,
our fathers, and all the people of the land.
Justice, O Lord, is on your side;
we are shamefaced even to this day:
we, the men of Judah, the residents of Jerusalem,
and all Israel, near and far,
in all the countries to which you have scattered them
because of their treachery toward you.
O LORD, we are shamefaced, like our kings, our
princes, and our fathers,
for having sinned against you.
But yours, O Lord, our God, are compassion and
forgiveness!
Yet we rebelled against you
and paid no heed to your command, O LORD, our
God,
to live by the law you gave us through your servants
the prophets.”

[Ps 79:8, 9, 11 and 13](#)

**R. (see 103:10a) Lord, do not deal with us
according to our sins.**

Remember not against us the iniquities of the past;
may your compassion quickly come to us,
for we are brought very low.

Help us, O God our savior,
because of the glory of your name;
Deliver us and pardon our sins
for your name's sake.

Let the prisoners' sighing come before you;
with your great power free those doomed to death.
Then we, your people and the sheep of your pasture,
will give thanks to you forever;
through all generations we will declare your praise.

[Lk 6:36-38](#)

Jesus said to his disciples:
“Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

“Stop judging and you will not be judged.
Stop condemning and you will not be condemned.
Forgive and you will be forgiven.
Give and gifts will be given to you;
a good measure, packed together, shaken down, and
overflowing,
will be poured into your lap.
For the measure with which you measure
will in return be measured out to you.”

As I tried to hear God's quiet voice
in these Scriptures I heard:

“It's Lent you know!”

Maybe it's because I wasn't all
that prepared to start *Lenting* when
Lent started 2 weeks ago.

I wasn't ready for the discipline of
prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

So in these readings what is God
trying to say to prepare me for the
passion and resurrection of Jesus?

Well in the Book of Daniel, the
verse just preceding this reading
has Daniel in earnest prayer with
fasting, sackcloth and ashes.

Well that encourages me to look
further...sounds like a Catholic
Lent to me.

Daniel recounts his people's sins:
wickedness, evil, rebellion,
departure and disobedience.

He is shamefaced for what his
people has returned to God.
This shamefaced stuff sounds a lot
like good ol' fashioned Catholic
guilt.

In fact some of these offenses
sound pretty close to some of my
choices.

But we aren't abandoned in that
shame.

Daniel extols our Lord's
compassion and forgiveness.

The Psalmist asks God with
confidence to forget our sins and
to pardon us.

The only value of shame is that it compels us to be honest with ourselves.

If I can't be honest with myself, how can I offer myself to God.
If I'm not honest with myself, how can I allow God into those places that **I** tried to control, **my** way.

Shame is not to be wallowed in. Its purpose is to turn our hearts towards God and let him take over. If God takes over, where is there room for shame.

The Scripture gives us the assurance of his compassion and mercy.

Luke continues to illustrate God's nature by calling us to imitate Him.

If we stop judging,
we won't be judged.

If we stop condemning,
we won't be condemned.

We forgive;
God forgives.

This order could lead someone to think God is imitating our actions, that God's doing what we're doing.

In truth, we are being called to imitate the Divine.

God's forgiveness is extravagant, nothing chinsey about it.

You pack it down and still it is overflowing.

This is the resurrection hope that we can participate in... now.

There is no more room for shame. If I am honest and open to God, I can share in Jesus' resurrection experience.

Allow your shame to make you honest.

Allow your honesty to open your heart to God.

Allow God's overflowing love to wash your shame away and live joyously in Him... now and forever.