

Preparation and Worship

Nehemiah 9: 1-15

Introduction.

We live in an age of “Instant” everything!

Preparation is something that is at best an inconvenience, at worst despised.

This is especially true when it comes to the worship of God.

Modern “Church Man” wants to be “stimulated” or even worse “Entertained” in Church.

This chapter is an Antidote to such foolishness.

The true worship of God as we will see involves a great degree of spiritual preparedness and devotion.

We will look at the first 15 verses under the title “Preparation and Worship”

Note 1;

The Time of the Assembly.

Neh 9:1 Now in the twenty and fourth day of this month the children of Israel were assembled with fasting, and with sackclothes, and earth upon them.

John Gill

"The seventh month, the month Tisri or September, two days after the feast of tabernacles was ended"

Adam Clarke

"The feast of trumpets was on the first day of this month; on the fourteenth began the feast of tabernacles, which, lasting seven days, finished on the twenty-second; on the twenty-third they separated themselves from their illegitimate wives and children; and, on the twenty-fourth, they held a solemn day of fasting and confession of sin, and reading the law, which they closed by renewing their covenants."

Note 2;

The character of the Assembly.

*Neh 9:1 Now in the twenty and fourth day of this month the children of Israel were **assembled with fasting, and with sackclothes, and earth upon them.***

Consider:

Fasting = Sackclothes = Earth upon them

A true and genuine display of repentance which had to be postponed for a time.

Compare: Nehemiah 8:9

Q. When is the last time we met together with this attitude or devotion?

Matthew Henry

1. It was a day *to afflict the soul,*
Isa 58:5.

2. It was a day *to loose the bands of wickedness,* and that is the fast that

God has chosen, Isa_58:6. Without this, spreading sackcloth and ashes under us is but a jest.

3. It was a day of communion with God.
They fasted to him, even to him
(Zec_7:5)

Note 3;

The Commitment of their Assembly

Neh 9:2 And the seed of Israel separated themselves from all strangers, and stood and confessed their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers.

Consider:

The key words in verse 2

“Separated” because of “Strangers”

“Stood” because of their “Sins”

Compare:

Nehemiah 13: 1-3 {Separation}

Nehemiah 1: 6-7 {Confession}

Note 4;

The Cause of their Assembly

Neh 9:3 And they stood up in their place, and read in the book of the law of the LORD their God one fourth part of the day; and another fourth part they confessed, and worshipped the LORD their God.

Consider:

Here we have the essential elements of Biblical
Worship.

Reading.

Preaching. Compare Nehemiah 8: 7-8

Prayer.

Praise.

These, along with the sacraments are the only
prescribed means by which we worship God in the
public meetings of the Church.

We must not add nor take away from these.

Matthew Henry quotes from Bishop Simon Patrick.

Matthew Henry

"Bishop Patrick thinks that they spent the whole twelve hours of the day in devotion, that from six o'clock in the morning till nine they read, and then from nine to twelve they prayed, from twelve to three they read again, and from three till six at night they prayed again. The word of a fast day is good work, and therefore we should endeavour to make a day's work, a good day's work, of it."

We will now consider:

Their Worship of God.

Note 1;

The Character of their Worship.

*Neh 9:4 Then stood up upon the stairs, of the Levites, Jeshua, and Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, and Chenani, **and cried with a loud voice** unto the LORD their God.*

Lit: A Shriek

Consider:

This was not “half-hearted” or “formalized” worship,
but whole-hearted, spirit-filled worship.

Note 2;

The Cause of their Worship.

*cried with a loud voice **unto the LORD their God.***

Consider:

They worshipped the only true God and he was their
God.

Note 3;

The Call to Worship.

*Neh 9:5 Then the Levites, Jeshua, and Kadmiel,
Bani, Hashabniah, Sherebiah, Hodijah, Shebaniah,
and Pethahiah, **said, Stand up and bless the
LORD your God for ever and ever: and
blessed be thy glorious name, which is exalted
above all blessing and praise.***

Note 4;

The Object of their Worship

“and blessed be thy glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise.”

Consider:

We can never worship God sufficiently.

All eternity will not exhaust our praise.

Now we will consider the reasons why they worshipped God.

1. He is the sole Creator of the Universe.

Neh 9:6 Thou, even thou, art LORD alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee.

2. He is the God of Sovereign Election.

Neh 9:7 Thou art the LORD the God, who didst choose Abram, and broughtest him forth out of Ur of the Chaldees, and gavest him the name of Abraham;

3. He is the Covenant making and keeping God.

*Neh 9:8 And foundest his heart faithful before thee, **and madest a covenant with him** to give the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Jebusites, and the Girgashites, to give it, I say, to his seed, **and hast performed thy words**; for thou art righteous:*

4. He is the Righteous God.

“for thou art righteous”

This is why he keeps his Covenant!

5. He is the Compassionate God.

Neh 9:9 And didst see the affliction of our fathers in Egypt, and heardest their cry by the Red sea;

6. He is the All Knowing God.

*Neh 9:10 And shewedst signs and wonders upon Pharaoh, and on all his servants, and on all the people of his land: **for thou knewest that they dealt proudly against them.** So didst thou get thee a name, as it is this day.*

7. He is the God of Wonders.

Neh 9:11 And thou didst divide the sea before them, so that they went through the midst of the sea on the dry land; and their persecutors thou threwest into the deeps, as a stone into the mighty waters.

8. He is the Avenging God

11b

“and their persecutors thou threwest into the deeps, as a stone into the mighty waters”

9. He is the guiding God.

*Neh 9:12 Moreover thou **leddest them** in the day by a cloudy pillar; and in the night by a pillar of fire, **to give them light in the way wherein they should go.***

10. He is the Communicating God.

Neh 9:13 Thou camest down also upon mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right judgments, and true laws, good statutes and commandments:

11. He is the gracious God.

13b

“and gavest them right judgments, and true laws, good statutes and commandments:”

12. He is the Illuminating God.

Neh 9:14 And madest known unto them thy holy sabbath, and commandedst them precepts, statutes, and laws, by the hand of Moses thy servant:

13. He is the Providing God.

*Neh 9:15 And gavest them bread from heaven for their hunger, and broughtest forth water for them out of the rock for their **thirst**, and promisedst them that they should go in to possess the land which thou hadst sworn to give them.*

14. He is the Promise-Keeping God.

and promisedst them that they should go in to possess the land which thou hadst sworn to give them.

Brethren, We have all these reasons and so much more why we should worship and praise our God.

Next week we will consider the ungodly response of the Nation to God's kindnesses and also the forbearance of God with them. Verses; 16-31