

'Building Blocks of Faith Series'

Sermons in the Book of Nehemiah

Message 15 - 'Faultlessly Faithful' Nehemiah 9: 7 - 30



This prayer found here in Nehemiah 9 is the longest formal prayer in the Scriptures. It is an expression of the great reviving work of God that is taking place amongst the people at this time. This movement of God was founded on the primacy of the preaching of the Word, but it was the mighty movement of the Spirit of God that had caused a great awakening amongst the people. They have been convicted, they have repented, they have worshiped, and they have sought the Lord's presence. In this prayer, some of the attributes and characteristics of God have been made abundantly clear. The greatness of God, and in these verses the goodness of God in the following ways:

1. Israel was Formed and Freed - For God to intervene in the life of Abram and reveal Himself to Abram in the midst of a pagan situation shows the wonderful grace of God. It was because of His sovereign grace that he set His hand upon the life of Abram. God is the subject of every action that takes place in these verses. In the land of Egypt, the Jews multiplied greatly, and despite the oppression of a tyrannical and dictatorial rule who desired genocide, they witnessed God's power in mighty works. God is so good in His wonderful dealings with Israel. It is remarkable is it not that these people could turn their backs on God after all that He had done for them? When we think of all that He has done for us, how can we turn our backs on Him? It is clear that they did not truly love Him. Their following, their obedience was focused on the external, it was not a heart obedience. Their faith was not a living faith, it desired all the benefits from the great Giver, but did not want the Lord Himself. Think on this for a moment, can this be said of you?

2. Israel was Led - In v19-22, Israel was in the wilderness through their lack of faith and disobedience. For forty years they would wander, and yet as the old generation died, they were replaced by a new generation. God in his goodness and faithfulness never forsook His people. In miraculous ways He led them by cloud and fire, He graciously instructed them in the Word of God, He provided for all their practical necessities, and increasingly gave them victory over dangerous enemies. A vital lesson is here to be learnt, that this great God, is a God who keeps His promises, whose purposes are never thwarted, He is sovereign. The Jews fell into a very dangerous trap, they became short-sighted. We need to be careful if we are the Lord's people not to do the same, but it is easy to do. They forgot the promises, they forgot God's wonderful promises that He had in line for them and focused on the immediate.

3. Israel was Chastened - When you look back into Genesis at the promises that God made to Israel, we see time and again His faultless faithfulness. God had promised to multiply His people, did he keep that promise, emphatically yes! God had promised to grant them a land of goodness, did he keep that promise, emphatically yes! In the midst of this darkness and the unfaithfulness of Israel, God's faithfulness stands apart. Israel's obedience saw God's faithfulness in blessing them; Israel's disobedience saw God's faithfulness in chastening them; Israel's plea for mercy saw God's faithfulness to forgive. The goodness of God is such that He is willing to give His people countless blessings and privileges, but He will not allow or give the privilege of sinning and having their own way. As one commentator describes, 'God's purposes are more important than our pleasures, and He will accomplish His purposes even if He has to discipline us to do it'. God' chastening is also a great evidence of His goodness and love as much as His bountiful supply of our needs (Heb. 12:1-11, (v6) - '*For whom the LORD loves He chastens*'). For the believer, how grateful we should be that the Lord loves us too much to allow us to do as we wish without chastening.



Penzance Baptist Church

'Upholding the Ordinary Means of Grace'

Pastor Jonathan Stobbs