

## Nehemiah 9:6-15 - A Pattern of Praise

TSK, HebrewLexicon, Handfuls, Gaebelin, Trapp, Geneva, Poole, Delitzsch, JFB, Clarke, Barnes, Henry, Gill, INT, Eclectic, Expositor, Brothers and Sisters in the Lord: Before the Jews got all their laws straightened-out, before they could appoint judges, before they could establish good military order, **they stopped and worshipped**. And even **when they started to pray, they did not focus on all the things they personally needed**. They did not ask for soldiers, for wealth, for the death of their enemies, or for total freedom from the Medo-Persians. Instead, **they focused on praising God for his greatness and his goodness**. This is what you will hear about today.

Our headings are:

**Praise God for his Greatness Displayed to the World**

**Praise God for his Goodness Displayed to the World**

Our goals are: **That you will see God's greatness and goodness, celebrate his greatness and his goodness, and speak of his greatness and goodness so others can see them and celebrate them!**

### **Praise God for his Greatness Displayed to the World**

6 **You alone are the LORD**; You have **made heaven**, The heaven of heavens, **with all their host**, The **earth and everything on it**, **The seas** and all that is in them, And You **preserve** them all. The **host of heaven worships** You.

**1. God, the God who was being praised, was distinguished from all the gods of the world: He was Covenant God, Yahweh.**

This is like the Shema Israel: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord your God is One."

**2. God, Yahweh, made the heaven of heavens with all their host, meaning he made the home of the angels AND the angels!**

Some interpret this to refer to our solar system, the galaxies, clusters, and superclusters! The universe is so big we can't see to the end of it with the greatest telescopes. But the **language is unique, referring to the angels of heaven** as the hosts.

**Psalms 103:21 Bless the LORD, all you His hosts, You ministers of His, who do His pleasure.**

**3. God, Yahweh, made our earth by his powerful words in 6 days, and then he made everything on the earth.**

**He made the sea and the sea monsters!** (Some scientists believe we only know about 20% of what is in the oceans.) He moved the continents. He raised up the mountains. **He designed our vegetables. The animals were good. The plants were good.** And everything he made was very good.

**God, Yahweh, then made man, and when he did, he said he was very good.**

He did not allow man to crawl out of primordial slime. Evolution was not a means!

**4. God, Yahweh, preserves everything on earth – man, animals, plants, the planet, and everything beyond.**

Order continues to be maintained, even in a fallen world.

**Colossians 1:17** And He is before all things, and **in Him all things consist.**

**Psalms 36:6** Your righteousness is like the great mountains; Your judgments are a great deep; O LORD, **You preserve man and beast.**

**5. God, Yahweh, deserves to be worshipped by all, and even the angels (hosts) of heaven worship him!**

Because of his very position as God of all creation, he deserves to be worshipped.

**6. Lessons 4:**

**a. There is only one God of heaven and earth and his name is Yahweh. All other gods are imitations of the Devil.** And this one true God is your God! You are close to him by virtue of him being your Creator and especially close to him by virtue of him being your Re-Creator – the one who renewed your spiritually dead soul. **Praise the Lord!**

**b. Since he is God of everything, you are his stewards.** Don't destroy what he has made. Don't pollute the air and don't pollute the water. Cut down old trees but plant new ones. Don't destroy his creation for fun. Be a good environmentalist.

**c. Don't panic about climate change.** Take care of the earth, but don't worry about something God controls. It is contempt of God if you do! And it is making yourself God if you do. **Don't panic about some meteorite, comet, or out of control heavenly body destroying the earth.** God made the earth and God keeps the earth.

**d. Worship the Lord; don't you dare worship the creation.** Worship him properly.

### **Praise God for his Goodness Displayed to the World**

7 "You are the LORD God, **Who chose Abram**, And **brought him out** of Ur of the Chaldeans, And gave him the name Abraham;

**1. God chose Abram when he was in a foreign land, Ur of the Chaldees, modern day Iraq, a place known for worshipping fire.**

After God called him, God changed Abram's name to Abraham to show him his goodness. "Abram" meant "father," but

Abraham meant “father of many,” or “father of a multitude.”

**God would make him a great nation** even though he was old and his wife was barren. Notice this was provably the work of God: **God chose and God brought!** Later, **God saved Abraham from his sin by Abraham’s own Son who would die for him.** This calling of Abraham out from the Ur of the Chaldees was likely a teaching moment for **the Jews who themselves were enslaved by the Chaldeans** (Babylonians). **God sent them back to where their father had left for freedom.** Irony!

8 You found his heart faithful before You, And made a covenant with him To give the land of the Canaanites, The Hittites, the Amorites, The Perizzites, the Jebusites, And the Girgashites — To give it to his descendants. **You have performed Your words, For You are righteous.**

**2. God adopted Abraham and blessed him and God proved (found) Abraham faithful when he was willing to sacrifice his son Isaac, so God made a covenant with him to enrich him.**  
**God promised him Canaan** and the tribes there. **God also promised him the heavenly Canaan. God kept those promises.**

9 "You saw the affliction of our fathers in Egypt, And **heard their cry** by the Red Sea.

**3. God saw the troubles and affliction of Abraham’s children in Egypt and heard their cry for help even after they left and stood before the Red Sea with Pharaoh’s army charging behind them.**

1 Peter 3:12 For the **eyes of the LORD are on the righteous**, And His ears are open to their prayers; But the face of the LORD is against those who do evil."

10 You **showed signs and wonders against Pharaoh**, Against all his servants, And against all the people of his land. For You knew that they acted proudly against them. So You made a name for Yourself, as it is this day.

**4. God showed his wonders to Israel, saving them but destroying their enemies. (The final plagues hit the Egyptians only!)**

In doing this, God made a name for himself! Pharaoh and the Egyptians would never forget!

Exodus 9:16 "But indeed for this purpose **I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you**, and that **My name may be declared in all the earth.**

Joshua 2:10 "For we have heard how the **LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea** for you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were on the other side of the Jordan, **Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed.**

11 And You divided the sea before them, So that they went through the midst of the sea on the dry land; And their persecutors You threw into the deep, As a stone into the mighty waters.

**5. God separated the Red Sea so his people could walk through in safety and brought the sea back together to drown his enemies.**

They sank like stone into the depths of the Red Sea. (Psalm 78, 105:39, Isaiah 42:16, 58:8)

**Even the Canaanites heard of it and were still afraid 40 years after!** It was so dramatic.

12 Moreover You led them by day with a cloudy pillar, And by night with a pillar of fire, To give them light on the road Which they should travel.

**6. God guided the Jews by a cloudy pillar over them during the day and gave them a pillar of fire during the night so they could continue to move in safety.**

You have to think of the intense heat of the day and the almost freezing temperature at nights. These were not minor gifts.

Psalms 121:4 Behold, He who keeps Israel Shall neither slumber nor sleep.

And this is what he promised in the future. Isaiah 4:5-6.

13 "You came down also on Mount Sinai, And spoke with them from heaven, And gave them just ordinances and true laws, Good statutes and commandments.

**7. God sent the Jews his laws by Moses, writing them with his own finger, showing the Jews needed more than shade and heat.**

These were ordinances, laws, statutes, and commandments. These were different kinds of laws.

God did not leave men without the knowledge of how to be saved and how to live after they was saved.

14 You made known to them Your holy Sabbath, And commanded them **precepts, statutes and laws**, By the hand of Moses Your servant.

**8. God bestowed them with the Sabbath and gave them direction of how to keep it.**

How vital the Sabbath was! God made a clear note of it, even at creation – one of the creation ordinances.

Genesis 2:3 Then **God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it**, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.

15 You gave them **bread from heaven** for their hunger, And brought them **water out of**

**the rock** for their thirst, And told them to go in to possess the land **Which You had sworn to give them.**

**9. God supplied them with food when they were hungry and gave them water from the rock, God then gave them the land he swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob!**

God would supply all their needs according to his riches in glory. What plentiful possessions! Even their clothes and shoes did not wear out for 40 years.

**These were beautiful prefiguring of the Bread of Heaven and the Water of Life** who would come to save the people from their spiritual famine.

John 6: 31 "Our **fathers ate the manna** in the desert; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'" 32 Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, **but My Father gives you the true bread** from heaven.

**10. Lessons 7:**

**a. If you want to know how to praise God, go to God's Word and also learn from history.** Learn of God's greatness and his goodness in his Word and witness it in the world.

**b. The greatest good God has done for you is to send his Son to be your Savior.** He gave you his grace! He did so through the covenant and your Covenant Keeper. So praise him.

**c. God knows all the dark days of your life.** He misses nothing. More than that, he cares for you even during those times you think he is missing. So praise him.

**d. God hears every single prayer you make; his ears never get heavy!** He never has too many requests to confuse him. Praise him.

**e. You only leave this world when God says so.** If he must destroy your enemies, he will. If he must do a miracle, he will. If you must get a rebuke, he will do it. So praise him!

**f. All your needs will be met that are essential for your survival so you can do the work the Lord has called you to do.** It doesn't mean you will have everything you want, but you will have what you need to do God's work. So praise him.

**g. All of God's gifts are designed for his children to honor their Savior who suffered and died in their place – to possess the world for him.** Don't stop praising him.

**Conclusion:**

**God's greatness is displayed throughout the world!** Look. Think about it. Praise him. **God's goodness is experienced in a general way by all the people of the world but it is experienced in a personal, special way by all those who are his children through Jesus.**

Brothers and Sisters in the Lord:

**1. Having seen God's greatness and having experience his goodness, celebrate him.** Shout it out loudly. Psalms 145:10 *All Your works shall praise You, O LORD, And Your saints shall bless You.*

**2. Having seen God's greatness and having experienced his goodness, speak of them to the world** so they can experience what you have experienced.

**3. Having seen God's greatness and having experienced his goodness, prepare for heaven.** Hebrews 4:1 *Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it.*

Finally: If you are not a Christian, know you are still bound to honor God for being your Creator and giving you common grace. God will condemn you if you don't honor him. So ask God for his special grace to honor him. God will condemn you if you don't do this, but he will credit you with Christ's life and death if you do!