

September 18th, 2022- Pastor Kevin Olivier

Nehemiah 9:1-6 - "From Sorrow to Praise"

- A. Good soil with the proper amount of rain & sunshine produces a fruitful harvest of fruits, vegetables, and grain. In the same fashion godly sorrow produces a true praise of God.
- B. Another thing that produces praise is a true heart of thanksgiving to God. That is what the people of Judah gave to God under the godly leadership of Nehemiah as governor.
- D. In **Neh 8**, after the marathon reading of God's Word, the people responded with weeping yet notice what Nehemiah, Ezra, & the Levites said to the them in **Neh 8:9-12**.
 - 1. If one makes the argument that a person who understands God's grace no longer has a place for weeping & sorrow over sin. The opening of **Neh 9** would prove him or her wrong.
 - 2. The people are back to grieving over their sin. This time no one is telling them to stop.

God wants you to have sorrow over sin that leads you to praise Him.	I. <u>ISRAEL'S SORROW & OURS</u> II. <u>THE LEVITE'S PRAISE & OURS</u>
---	---

I. ISRAEL'S SORROW & OURS → Look at **v1**

- A. The way the people of Israel expressed sorrow was so very different than ours.
 - 1. Some of us may fast, yet it is a very foreign notion for us to put sackcloth & dirt upon our bodies.
 - 2. After hearing the preaching of Jonah, from the king of Nineveh to the lowly livestock fasted, being covered with sackcloth & ashes. **Jonah 3:10** "When God saw their deeds, that they turned from their wicked way, then God relented concerning the calamity which He had declared He would bring upon them. And He did not do it."
 - 3. When David was grieving & seeking God's mercy because of the consequences of his sin, he fasted & laid on the ground all night (**2 Sam 12:16**).
- B. Sackcloth was made of goat's hair. It was worn directly against the sin & would make a person miserable. There is a logical reason for this.
 - 1. In America, many Christians are accustomed to indulging & pampering the flesh.
 - 2. Some may say this OT practice of self-inflicted physical misery has no place in the NT church after the cross of Christ. Consider **1 Cor 9:27** where Paul said, "I discipline [lit. 'bruise'] my body & make it my slave."
 - 3. Jesus said, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, & take up his cross & follow Me." It takes denial of the flesh & our other desires to grow in holiness.
- C. In **v2**, Nehemiah tells us about how the Israelites confessed their sins. → **v2**
 - 1. This confession of sin was a reaction to a great deal of Scripture reading in **Neh 8**.
 - 2. **Ezek 18:20** "The person who sins will die. The son will not bear the punishment for the father's iniquity, nor will the father bear the punishment for the son's iniquity"
 - 3. One group of scholars wrote: "Not only did they read in their recent sufferings a punishment of the national apostasy and guilt, but they had made themselves partakers of their fathers' sins by following the same evil ways."¹
- D. Again, the spiritual revival in Judah was rooted in holy Scripture. → **v3**
Pray that God would give you such a thirst for His Word & to worship Him.

¹ Jamieson, R., Fausset, A. R., & Brown, D. (1997). [Commentary Critical & Explanatory on the Whole Bible](#) (Vol. 1, p. 299).

II. THE LEVITE'S PRAISE & OURS → **v5**

A. They are saying to the pple of Judah, "You all have had time to weep— for godly sorry producing repentance,² now it is time to give God the praise due to Him."

1. True sorry over sin- true repentance should always lead you to worship God— to **"Arise, bless the Lord your God forever & ever!"**
2. If God has saved you through the sacrifice of His Son Jesus, it should be your heart's desire to worship Him.
 - a. Christians in the early church worshiped in hiding even with the threat of torture & death looming over them.
 - b. Some people today are not willing to undergo physical discomfort & hardship to worship the Triune God.
3. Godly sorrow should lead you to repentance in Christ & a steadfast desire to praise Him, **"not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; & all the more as you see the day drawing near" (Heb 10:25).**

B. The following prayer follows the beginning of a popular, biblical acronym on how to pray: ACTS which stands for Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, & Supplication.

1. The began by giving God praise for His glorious name. → **2nd ½ of v5.**
 - a. God's name is holy & worthy of praise because He is holy & worthy of praise.
 - b. His name is to be used for praise rather than for cursing or otherwise mixed with profanity.
 - c. Ask God to help you grow in your holy use of His name.
2. The Levites also led in worship, praising God as Creator. → **v6**
 - a. A great reason so many do not seek God to give Him thanks & praise is because they have been deceived by the Devil by the lie of evolution.
 - 1) Some may argue, "It doesn't matter if they believe in evolution or not as long as they believe in Jesus as their Savior for the forgiveness of their sins."
 - 2) It is the case that some Christians can believe in both a form of theistic evolution & the gospel; however, evolution is a HUGE stumbling block for millions who reject Christ. Here are some logical reasons:
 - a) If you cannot trust God's Word in Genesis, how can you trust what it says in the NT? Genesis & the creation account is foundational; it is not a supplement regarding God's plan of salvation.
 - b) If you cannot trust what God said about the 1st Adam, how can you trust what He said about the 2nd Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - b. Not only did God make the earth & seas; He made the heavens of heavens & all their host— the holy angels. The Levites prayed: **"The heavenly host bows down before You."** Shouldn't you as well bow down before Him.

Review, further application, and conclusion: