

Nehemiah 9:1-38 – Repenting and Remembering

During the celebrations of the Feast of Trumpets and the Feast of Booths, Israel listened to God’s Word being read for long periods of time. The Feasts were a time of rejoicing, but shortly after the feasts, God’s Word convicted their hearts and they confessed their sins and the sins of their fathers.

Read Nehemiah 9:1-5.

The solemn assembly after the week long Feast of Booths was on the twenty second day of the month. In verse 1, when had the people of Israel assembled? Was there any special appointed day or feast on that day? Compared with the joy of the Feast of Booths, what was the mood of the people in verse 1? What do you think caused them to assemble? (9:1)

What do you think caused them to confess their sins and the sins of their fathers? What sins do you think they confessed? When you think about the current state of the church in the United States (or Canada if you are in Canada) and the moral condition of your country, what sins need to be confessed? (9:2)

In verse 3, they once again read from the Law of God. The reading lasted a quarter of the day (6 hours?). They had already read from God’s Law during the Feasts of Trumpets and Booths. What did they do for another quarter of the day? (9:3)

In verse 4, some translations have “platform” instead of “stairs”. What were the stairs of the Levites? What was the purpose of the stairs? What did the Levites do and say? (9:4-5)

Read Nehemiah 9:6-8.

Some translations begin verse 6 with “And Ezra said”. This is based on the Greek translation of the Old Testament and not the original Hebrew text. Verses 6-8 appear to be taken from Genesis. What was highlighted from Genesis in these three verses? (9:6-8)

Read Nehemiah 9:9-15.

Verses 9-15 appear to be taken from Exodus. What was highlighted from Exodus in these seven verses? (9:9-15)

Read Nehemiah 9:16-21.

These verses appear to be taken from Exodus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. Until this section, the attributes and actions of God have been praised and remembered. This section includes the acts of Israel. What was recounted about how Israel responded to God's goodness to them during the Exodus and their wandering in the wilderness? (9:16-21)

How did God react to Israel's rebellion and faithlessness? (9:17,19-21)

Read Nehemiah 9:22-25.

These verses appear to be taken from Numbers, Deuteronomy and Joshua. What was remembered about the time period when God gave Israel the land he promised to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and their seed? (9:22-25)

Read Nehemiah 9:26-31.

These verses summarize Israel's sins and the consequences of their sins while they were in the Promised Land. What sins did they commit? What were the consequences of their sins? How did God respond to their sinfulness? Verse 29 contains a phrase that should be familiar, "if a person does them, he shall live by them". This is from Leviticus 18:5 and is quoted in Romans 10:5 and Galatians 3:12. (9:26-31)

Read Nehemiah 9:32-38.

What request was made in verse 32? In verses 33-35, what sins were confessed? What did they praise God for in verses 33, 35-36?

What was Israel's current state as a result of Israel's present and past sins? (9:36-37) What did they do in verse 38?