

OUR FORGIVING GOD



After celebrating the Feast of Tabernacles, Israel continued studying the Word of God.

They understood their situation. They had sinned, and they repented.

In Nehemiah 9, the people raised a prayer of confession and praise. They acknowledge God's greatness and His work in their lives.

➔ **Third reading of the Law (v. 1-3)**

➔ **A prayer of confession:**

● **Praising God (v. 4-8)**

● **God's faithfulness (v. 9-22)**

● **God's kindness (v. 23-31)**

● **Praising God and requests (v. 32-38)**



THIRD READING OF THE LAW

"Then those of Israelite lineage separated themselves from all foreigners; and they stood and confessed their sins and the iniquities of their fathers." (Nehemiah 9:2)



The Israelites wanted to meet with God in an intimate setting. Therefore, they didn't invite the foreigners who were living among them.

They understood that they were suffering the consequences of their sin against God. Thus, they read the Law for the third time.

They didn't try to blame anyone or complain about their oppressors or leaders. They humbly studied the Word of God for three hours, and confessed their sins and praised God for three more hours.

“The prophet Daniel was drawing very near to God when he was seeking Him with confession and humiliation of soul. He did not try to excuse himself or his people, but acknowledged the full extent of their transgression. In their behalf he confessed sins of which he himself was not guilty, and besought the mercy of God, that he might bring his brethren to see their sins.”

PRAISING GOD

**"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."
(Nehemiah 9:6)**

After the reading, the Levites praised God. Then they encouraged the people to bless God and His name. The name of God is an expression of His character and eternity.

They praised God in their prayer because:



**He's the
Creator of
everything**



**He's the
sustainer of
life**



**He chose
them as His
people**



**He gave
them the
land of
Canaan**



**He's faithful
to His
promises**

“But His [God's] energy is still exerted in upholding the objects of His creation. It is not because the mechanism that has once been set in motion continues to act by its own inherent energy that the pulse beats and breath follows breath; but every breath, every pulsation of the heart, is an evidence of the all-pervading care of Him in whom 'we live, and move, and have our being.' Acts 17:28”

E.G.W. (Patriarchs and Prophets, cp. 9, p. 115)

GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

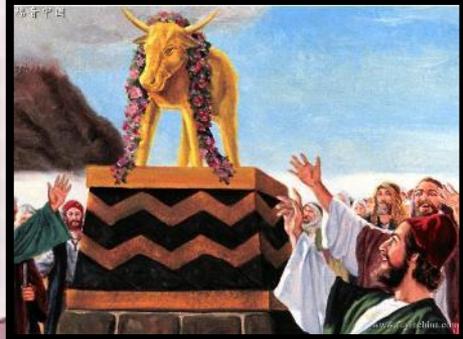
"Yet in Your manifold mercies You did not forsake them in the wilderness. The pillar of the cloud did not depart from them by day, to lead them on the road; nor the pillar of fire by night, to show them light, and the way they should go."
(Nehemiah 9:19)

After praising God, they recalled how God was faithful to Israel at the desert.

God delivered them from Egypt, guided them with a cloud and a pillar of fire, gave them fair laws and the Sabbath, fed them with bread from heaven, gave them water, and protected their clothes and feet.

However, they were arrogant, they became stubborn, they didn't obey the Commandments, they wanted to return to Egypt, and they made a golden calf to worship it.

God never left them after all. His faithfulness and mercy will never leave us.



“The record of God’s dealing with the wanderers in all their marchings to and fro, in their exposure to hunger, thirst, and weariness, and in the striking manifestations of His power for their relief, is fraught with warning and instruction for His people in this age. The varied experiences of the Hebrews was a school of preparation for their promised home in Canaan. God would have His people review in these days, with a humble heart and a teachable spirit, the trials through which ancient Israel passed, that they may be instructed in their preparation for the heavenly Canaan.”

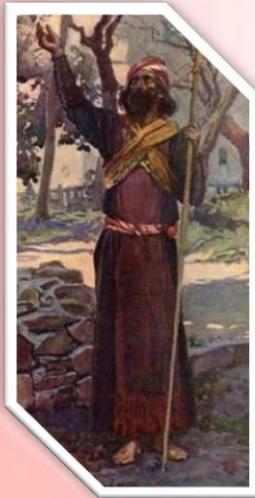
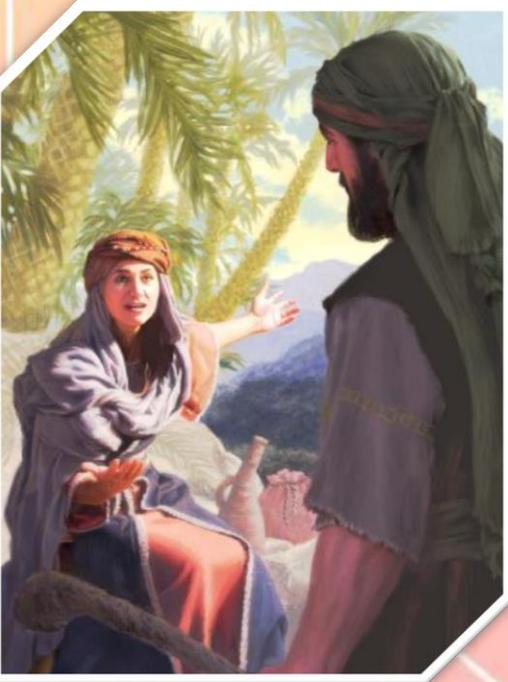
GOD'S KINDNESS

**"So they ate and were filled and grew fat, and delighted themselves in Your great goodness."
(Nehemiah 9:25)**

God is good. He gave the Israelites the land of Canaan, and they could enjoy already built houses, and already planted lands. But they didn't show kindness back.

During the sad age of the Judges, Israel moved constantly between repentance and unfaithfulness. Later they even rejected and killed the prophets God sent.

**"Nevertheless in Your great mercy You did not utterly consume them nor forsake them; for You are God, gracious and merciful."
(Nehemiah 9:31).**



God is always willing to listen to our confession, the fruit of repentance. He always justifies us because of His kindness.

E.G.W. (God's Amazing Grace, May 11)

“God requires that we confess our sins, and humble our hearts before Him; but at the same time we should have confidence in Him as a tender Father, who will not forsake those who put their trust in Him... God does not give us up because of our sins. We may make mistakes, and grieve His Spirit; but when we repent, and come to Him with contrite hearts, He will not turn us away.”

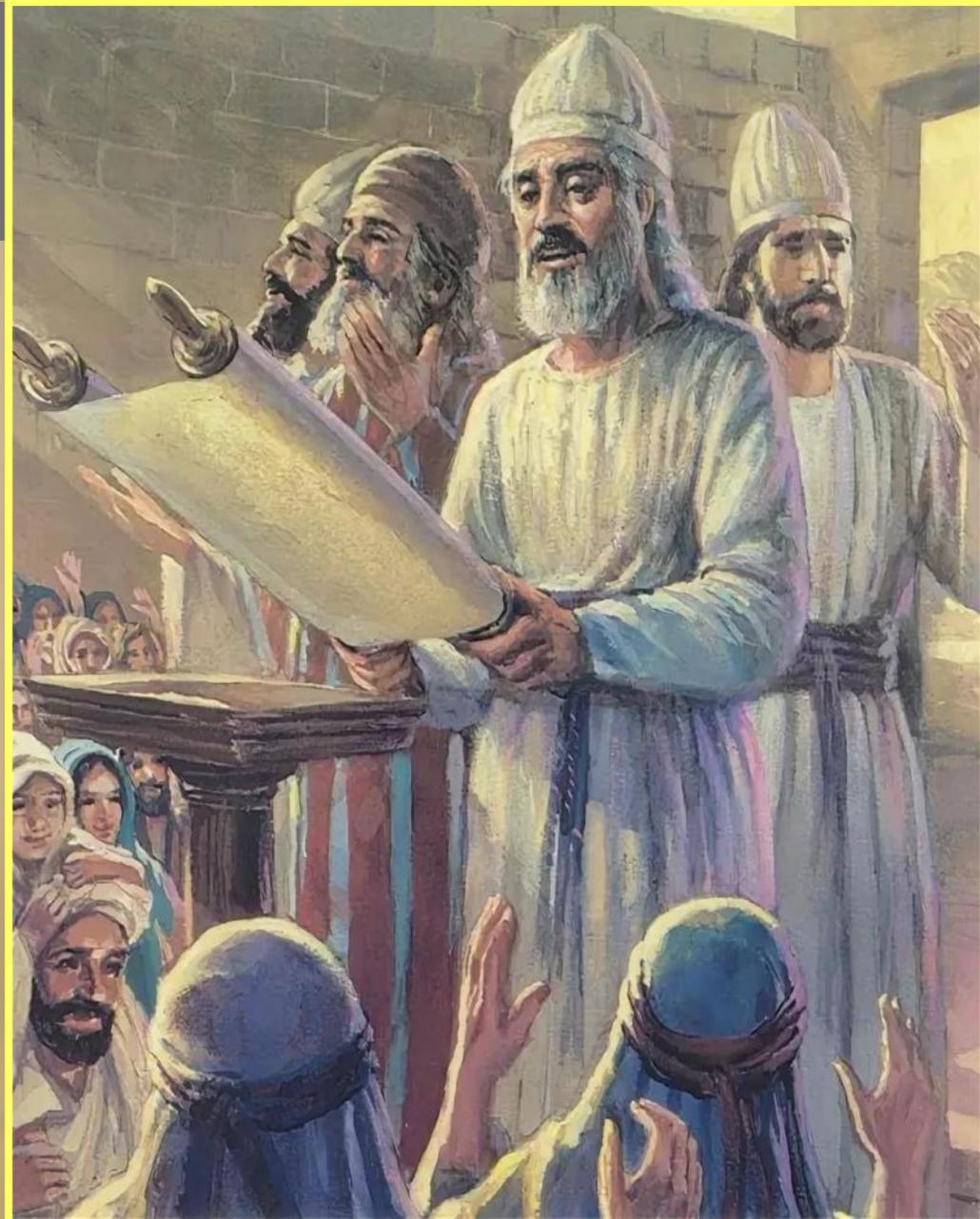
PRAISING GOD AND REQUESTS

"However You are just in all that has befallen us; for You have dealt faithfully, but we have done wickedly." (Nehemiah 9:33)

The Levites acknowledged the sins of the people against God despite His kindness. They affirmed that they deserved the consequences of their sins.

They praised God because He is great, strong, fearsome and faithful. They also told Him about the oppression they were suffering in the land God had given them.

They sought shelter in God's undeserved grace and asked Him to act in their favor. They made a promise before Him.



“The song of praise ended, the leaders of the congregation related the history of Israel, showing how great had been God’s goodness toward them, and how great their ingratitude. Then the whole congregation entered into a covenant to keep all the commandments of God. They had suffered punishment for their sins; now they acknowledged the justice of God’s dealings with them and pledged themselves to obey His law. And that this might be ‘a sure covenant,’ and be preserved in permanent form, as a memorial of the obligation they had taken upon themselves, it was written out, and the priests, Levites, and princes signed it. It was to serve as a reminder of duty and a barrier against temptation.”

E.G.W. (Prophets and Kings, cp. 56, p. 666)

“It would be a scene well-pleasing to God and angels, would His professed followers in this generation unite, as did Israel of old [referring especially to the revival in the days of Nehemiah], in a solemn covenant to 'observe and do all the commandments of the Lord our Lord, and his judgments and his statutes.'”