

THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH

"Thy Glorious Name"

Nehemiah 9:4-12

Introduction

1. Following the great celebration of the feast of tabernacles (8:13-18), the nation gathered for Bible reading, fasting, confession, worship, and an expression of separation unto the Lord (9:1-3).

2. Now comes an extended rehearsal of God's goodness unto the nation. Disobedience is confessed because it led to a servitude in the promised land (vv. 26-37). This called forth a covenant of intent (9:38-10:39).

3. Those who led in this expression of praise are listed (vv. 4,5). The deviations between the two lists in these verses is not easily resolved, but all are Levites who stood up on the podium provided (cf. 8:4). They themselves addressed the Lord (v. 4) and called upon the nation to do the same (v. 5). The adoration expected related both to God's person (the Lord God) and His Name (glorious Name). He is above all (Psa. 115; Isa. 44:6). With this focus upon the Lord, it is evident that His works are worthy of praise. Some of these are listed:-

1. GOD'S CREATION v. 6.

It is stated that He is the only God! This conclusion is reached by virtue of His claims. Since the God of the Bible is as He says He is, there is no other. He stands without a peer! As such, He has "made" all things. The verb used here is synonymous to another one employed in Genesis 1 and is found in Exodus 20:11. He is creator of:

a. Heavens. This is an obvious reference to everything in space as well as the immediate atmosphere. This sort of creative power overwhelmed the Psalmist (8, 104). The billions and billions of stars are all the result of His creative genius.

b. Earth. Just the thought of the millions of insects which crawl at night is enough to stagger the mind when it is recorded here that He made the earth and "all things that are in it."

c. Seas. The ocean basins are all the result of His hand. Before the flood, they were much smaller than now, but still the water cannot be computed which He made! To comprehend the sudden and instantaneousness of the creation of all things by our God surely is

worthy of the God we adore.

NOTE: Added to God's creative work here is His preservation of all things (v. 6; Col.1:17); No wonder the creative hosts of heaven worship Him (v.6). We should also!

2. GOD'S RELATION

Another item which is provided in this extensive reflection upon Himself and His works is the peculiar position Abraham sustained to the Lord.

a. God chose him. The record of this is clearly in the Word (Gen.12:1-3). God has this right to select for He is God (Mal. 1:2, 3; Rom. 9). No hyperCalvanism here!

b. God led him. Abraham's call from a well developed society unto the unknown land of Palestine was a call of faith. The verb form shows God "caused" Abraham to go (cf. Lot in Gen.19:15ff.).

c. God gave him. The reference here is to the change in the patriarch's name (Gen. 17:5). The alteration, from the context, shows that Abraham means "father of a multitude."

d. God found him. Here is a precious personal note. Abraham is found with an "amen" heart before the Lord (Hebrew!). What a man he was.

e. God covenanted him. This is an explicit statement to the ownership of the land for Israel. It is all a gift of God to the single nation (Gen. 15:18-21). The Babylonian Captivity had not changed God's purpose. The addition of "performed" shows that God keeps His promises! Reason? He is righteous (cf. Ezra 9:15).

3. GOD'S ACTION

a. God saw them. Two specifics are mentioned: Egyptian bondage (Ex.2:23-25) and Red Sea problem (Ex. 14). To accomplish these deliverances, it is reported that signs and miracles were wrought in Egypt (v. 10) and the water divided (v. 11) resulting in the overthrow of the enemy.

b. God led them. The two-fold cloudy and fiery pillars are mentioned to show God's guidance. They had light for their dark way!

CONCLUSION This is a glorious example of what the Psalmist says is a good exercise for the child of God (40:5). It is good and worthy to give praise unto the Lord.