



Week 1 – Days 1 - 7 - NOTES



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NEHEMIAH 9 - AMAZING GRACE!

* Jehovah God is the main subject of this chapter. This prayer reviews the history of Israel and reveals both the majesty of God and the depravity of man.

* As you read this prayer, notice that it reveals the GREATNESS of GOD (1-6), the GOODNESS of God (7-20) and the GRACE of God (31-38).

* vs. 1 - Remember, this discourse began in (8:2) on the first day of the seventh month. It is now more than three weeks later and the people were still engaged in public worship.

* vs. 2 - God calls His people out - to be separate. (See Romans 12:1-2 and 2 Cor. 6:16-18.)

* vs. 3 - In most churches today, a 6-hour service consisting of 3 hours of preaching and 3 hours of praying would probably result in some requests for resignation, but to the Jewish people in that day, it was the beginning of a new life for them and their city.

They confessed their sins evidenced by fasting and wearing sackcloth - (a dark, coarse cloth made from goats hair), and they would put dust on their heads. These were signs of mourning and grief.





* WORSHIP - includes the Word of God, for the Word of God reveals the God of the Word. The better we know the Scriptures and respond to them, the better we will know God and become like Him. Any worship service that ignores the Scripture will not receive the blessing of God.

* True worship has many elements

1. Hearing the Scriptures
2. Praising God
3. Praying
4. Confessing Sin
5. Separating ourselves from that which is displeasing
6. Later we see the addition of singing

* vs. 5 - For the Jews, the importance of the Name of God can not be over-emphasized. When coming to the Name in the public reading of the Scriptures, they would not utter it, believing that by saying the name with human lips would defame it.

* vs. 6 - Even today, faithful Jews recite the "Shema" as their declaration of faith in the ONE and ONLY true God. (Deut. 6:4-9.) Remember, God is not just the greatest of all the gods - He ALONE is God!

* vs. 6b - Whenever God wanted to encourage Israel, He would point to creation around them and remind them that He made it all.





* vs. 13 - See how David described statutes and commandments in Psalm 19:7-11.

* vs. 16 - Read Psalm 78 for an x-ray of Israel's spiritual history.

* vs. 17 - Don't let the devil steal away the "wonders" that God has done in your life.

* vs. 17b - Where sin abounds – grace super abounds!

* vs. 17c - *slow to anger* = lit. in the Hebrew – “long of nose” and in the English – “to have a long fuse”.

* vs. 23 & 25 - It was a "fat land" (fertile) and Israel became a "fat people" (nourished and satisfied) and this led to their downfall. (See Deut. 32:15). Israel delighted themselves in God's great goodness but they did not delight themselves in the Lord.

* *"For every 100 men who can stand adversity, there is only one who can stand prosperity."* - Thomas Carlye

"If you want to destroy a nation, give it too much, make it greedy, miserable and sick" - John Steinbeck

* vs. 30 - The Father is never as close to us as when He is chastening us.





* vs. 33 - Note: The Levites used we, not they - remember it is easy to be convicted about other people's sins, but God forgives us only when we repent and confess our own sins.

* vs. 36 - Whatever we fail to give God, we cannot keep for ourselves; He will take it one way or another. Christians who refuse to honor God joyfully by faithfully giving often end up having to spend money reluctantly on obligations that are painful and unexpected. (See Mal 3:7-12.)

Israel, although they had some autonomy, because of their disobedience were slaves in their own land! Being slaves meant that they had to pay taxes to Persia as well as to give them tribute from the produce of the land. Note the distress in Nehemiah's closing prayer.





NEHEMIAH 10 – AFTER WE SAY AMEN!

* 9:38 – Was this verse real? Chapter 10 gives the following 3 indications that validate the above declaration:

1. They submitted to the Word of God.
2. They separated themselves.
3. They provided financial support for the House of God.

* vs. 28 – Separation is simply total devotion to God, no matter what the cost. Separation that ignores God and other believers is isolation and will eventually lead to sin. Only the Holy Spirit can give us the kind of balance we need to live a godly life in this ungodly world.

* vs. 29 – Oaths are not something you do without a lot of thought (see Numbers 30, Matthew 5:33-37; 23:16-28; The curse mentioned here probably refers to those found in the Deuteronomic Covenant (see Deut. 28:15-68).

* vs. 32 – Temple tax – a third of a shekel (about one-eighth of an ounce). The original tax was used to make the silver sockets and hooks for the tabernacle (Ex. 38:25-28). In Ex. 30:11-16 we read that everyone over 20 was charged one-half of a shekel as a “ransom for himself.”





* vs. 34 – Wood was a precious commodity; remember the brazen altar was to be kept burning constantly (Lev. 6:12-13). The gathering of the wood was a humble job but it also allowed everybody to participate.

* vs. 35 – The Jews were taught to give their first and best when it came to offerings.

* vs. 37 – Tithe (for the Jews it was ten percent) -- they were to bring one-tenth of their produce to the Lord each year for the support of the Levites. The Levites then gave one-tenth of that to the priests. The Jews were also to tithe from the ninety percent that was left and take that to the Temple for the annual feasts. (Deut. 26:1-11.) Lastly, to these two tithes was added one-third which was received every third year for the poor of the land. (Deut. 26:12-15; 14:28-29.)

* vs. 39 – “We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.” Winston Churchill

Under the leadership of Ezra and Nehemiah, the people began to place a higher priority on spiritual things, including the care of the restored temple. This was even more important than the building and the restoration of the walls.





SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How does the Rock Church incorporate the Word into worship?
2. What would you like to see the Rock add in order to make our worship time richer? Go to the 52-day link and share with us your insights.
3. In order to keep the devil from stealing away the "wonders" that God has done in your life, take a moment to share with your group the undeniable miracles that God has done for you.
4. How do Christians get "fat" in our day? How can Christians at the Rock be in top physical shape spiritually?
5. List the "attributes and greatness of God" found in chapter nine.
6. What does it mean in this day to submit to the Word, be separated from the world, and to financially support the Temple of God?
7. Making vows and oaths are something God takes seriously! Check out the tragic story of Jephthah in Judges 11. What oaths or vows have you made?





MILES' SERMON OUTLINE

How to Make the Dream Come True
A Call to Holy Living
Nehemiah 9-10

What does God want to see happen through the vision He has given us? It's not just about building projects but building His people.

We've seen how God will change our lives through His Word. The dream will also call us to holy living. What does true holiness look like?

True holiness will be evidenced by...

- I. BROKENNESS OVER SIN (V. 1)
- II. SEPARATION FROM SIN (V. 2A)
- III. CONFESSION OF MY SIN (C. 2B, 5B-37)
- IV. WORSHIP (V. 3-6)
- V. COVENANT KEEPING (V. 9:38-10:39)

Lord is there any wicked way in me?





FIFTY TWO DAY CHECKLIST

COMMUNITY

- Accountability Prayer Partners.
- Prayer for unsaved friends.
- Everyone invite someone to church.
- How is your group going to celebrate Thanksgiving?
- Plan a Small Group Christmas party.

SERVICE

- Remember Toys for Joy.
- Remember Fire Victims.
- Remember the Rock's Food and Clothing Drive.
- Where can you serve in your neighborhood?

STUDY

- Daily reading schedule.
- Memory Verse.
- Nehemiah 9 & 10 – notes.

