



Rice Memorial MBC

Pastor J. Harper, President of State Convention
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Minister Danny Current, Dean of Christian Education
Pastor Michael Hansberry, Southern District Moderator

Rice Memorial Missionary Baptist Church

Apostle Walter F. Camp, Presiding Senior Pastor
Pastor David K. Baker III, 2nd Presiding
802 W. 15th, Little Rock, AR 72202, 501-301-8181

www.RiceMemorialBaptistChurch.org

Corporate Confession of Sins

Definitions in **bold** letters are from **Strong's** Exhaustive Concordance
Other definitions are from **Webster's** Dictionary, 1828 Edition
or Roget's Thesaurus – **August 11, 2013**

***Worship with us at 3201 Mary St until we rebuild our sanctuary at 802 W. 15th,
... We're just behind Kaufman's Lumber Company in Little Rock Arkansas***

Nehemiah 9:2, 6-7, 9-10, 30-36

Introduction: The tenth day of the seventh month between the feast of trumpets (Nehemiah 8:2) and the feast of tabernacles (Nehemiah 9:14) was appointed to be the day of **atonement**; we have no reason to think but that it was religiously observed, though it is not mentioned. But here we have an account of an occasional fast that was kept a fortnight (two weeks) after that, with reference to the present posture of their affairs, and it was, as that, a day of **humiliation (humbleness)**. There is a time to weep as well as a **time to laugh**. We have here an account. I. How this fast was observed, Nehemiah 9:1-3. II. What were the heads of the prayer that was made to God on that occasion, wherein they made a thankful acknowledgment of God's mercies, a penitent **confession of sin**, and a **humble submission** to the righteous hand of God in the **judgments** that were brought upon them, concluding with a solemn resolution of new obedience, Nehemiah 9:4-38.

(Source: *The Matthew Henry Commentary on the whole Bible* classic.studylight.org/com/mhc)

Nehemiah 9:1-2, Now in the twenty and fourth day of this month the children of Israel were assembled with fasting, and with **sackclothes (coarse loose cloth)**, and earth upon them. And the seed of Israel separated themselves from all strangers, and stood and **confessed** their sins, and the iniquities of their **fathers**.

NOTE: All of this great outpouring of **grief** and **confession** took place as a result of reading God's law. "They had clearly desired to do this earlier (Nehemiah 8:9); but it would have been inappropriate during the feast." Therefore, they rallied for that purpose on the twenty fourth day of that same seventh month, the next month after the wall was built; and "This was only the second day after the conclusion of the Feast of Tabernacles."

A very important revelation of this chapter is that it was the Levites, and not the priests, who led Israel in this penitential prayer of confession and praise of God. From the Book of Malachi, we learn of the near total apostasy of the Jewish priesthood; and in Zechariah, they are clearly revealed as the **false shepherds** who destroyed the nation. There is not a word in this chapter that even hints of any priestly participation in this great repentance, confession and prayer. Some of them were even traitors in the employ of Tobiah and had even conspired to murder Nehemiah.

The seed of Israel separated themselves from all foreigners (Nehemiah 9:2). Keil noted that, This is not primarily a reference to the dissolution of illegal marriages, but it is rather a voluntary renunciation of all connection with the heathen and of heathen customs. (Source: *Coffman Commentaries on the Old & New Testament* classic.studylight.org/com/bcc/)

Nehemiah 9:3, And they **stood up** in their place, and **read** in the book of the law of the LORD

their God one fourth part of the day; and another fourth part they confessed, and worshipped the LORD their God.

NOTE: As they did no manner of work on this day of fasting and humiliation, so they spent the whole of it in religious duties. They began, says Calmet, on the first hour, and continued these exercises to the third hour; **(3 hours)** from the third they recommenced, and continued till the sixth hour; from the sixth to the ninth; and from the ninth, to the twelfth or last hour.

1. They heard the law read, **standing**; 2. They **prostrated** themselves, and **confessed** their sins; 3. They arose to **praise** God for having spared and dealt thus mercifully with them. (Source: *The Adam Clarke Commentary* classic.studylight.org/com/acc/)

Nehemiah 9:4-10, Then stood up upon the **stairs (platform)**, of the Levites, Jeshua, and Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, and Chenani, and **cried** with a loud voice unto the LORD their God. Then the Levites, Jeshua, and Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabniah, Sherebiah, Hodijah, Shebaniah, and Pethahiah, said, Stand up and bless the LORD your God for ever and ever: and blessed be thy glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise. Thou, even thou, art **LORD (the self-Existent or Eternal; Jehovah [Yahweh])** alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and thou **preservest** them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee. Thou art the LORD the God, who didst choose Abram, and broughtest him forth out of Ur of the Chaldees, and gavest him the name of **Abraham**... And foundest his heart faithful before thee, and madest a covenant with him to give the land of the Canaanites ...Hittites, ...Amorites ...Perizzites ...Jebusites, and ...Girgashites, to give it, I say, to his seed, and hast **performed** thy words; for thou art **righteous**: And didst see the affliction of our fathers in Egypt, and heardest their cry by the Red sea; And shewedst **signs** and **wonders** upon Pharaoh, and on all his servants, and on all the people of his land: for thou knewest that they dealt proudly against them. So didst thou get thee a name, as it is this day.

NOTE: A profitable and acceptable feature of any **prayer** is a **rehearsal** of God's **promises** and heartfelt **praise** for his fulfillment of them. All of the things mentioned here have been the subject of our extensive comments upon the Pentateuch, particularly in Genesis. It appears that during the whole history of ancient Israel that they seemed never to appreciate, nor even to remember, the reason **why** God called Abraham. That reason: "THAT IN THEE AND IN THY SEED (SINGULAR) ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH SHALL BE BLESSED" (Gen. 12:3; 26:4).

(Source: *Coffman Commentaries on the Old & New Testament* classic.studylight.org/com/bcc/)

Nehemiah 9:11-20, And thou didst divide the sea before them, so that they went through the midst of the sea on the dry land; and their persecutors thou threwest into the deeps, as a stone into the mighty waters. Moreover thou **leddest** them in the day by a **cloudy pillar**; and in the night by a **pillar of fire**, to give them light in the way wherein they should go. Thou camest down also upon mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right judgments, and true laws, good statutes and commandments: And madest known unto them thy holy sabbath, and commandedst them precepts, statutes, and laws, by the hand of Moses thy servant: ...But they and our fathers dealt **proudly**, and **hardened** their necks, and **hearkened not** to thy commandments, And refused to obey, neither were mindful of thy wonders that thou didst among them; but hardened their necks, and in their rebellion appointed a captain to return to their bondage: but thou art a God **ready to pardon**, **gracious** and **merciful**, **slow to anger**, and of **great kindness**, and forsookest them not.

NOTE: It was seasonable to remember this now that they were interceding for the perfecting of their **deliverance** out of Babylon. They were then delivered, in compassion to their affliction, in answer to their cry, and in resistance of the pride and insolence (PRIDE) of their persecutors. Wherein they dealt proudly, God showed himself above them (Ex. 18:11),

and so got himself a name; for he said, I will get me **honour (GLORY)** upon Pharaoh. Even to this day the name of God is glorified for that wonderful work. It was done miraculously: signs and wonders were shown for the effecting of it; their deliverance was the destruction of their enemies; they were thrown into the deeps, as irrecoverably as a stone into the mighty waters. (4.) The conducting of them through the wilderness, by the pillar of cloud and fire, which showed them which way they should go, when they should remove, and when and where they should rest, directed all their stages and all their steps, Neh. 9:12. It was also a visible token of God's presence with them, to guide and guard them. They mention this again (Neh. 9:19), observing that though they had by their sins provoked God to withdraw from them, and leave them to wander and perish in the by-paths of the wilderness, yet in his manifold mercy he continued to lead them, and took not away the pillar of cloud and fire, Nehemiah 9:19. When **mercies**, though **forfeited**, are **continued**, we are bound to be **doubly thankful**.

(Source: *The Matthew Henry Commentary on the whole Bible* classic.studylight.org/com/mhc)

Nehemiah 9:21-29, Yea, **forty years** didst thou **sustain** them in the wilderness, so that they **lacked nothing**; their clothes waxed not old, and their feet swelled not. Moreover thou gavest them kingdoms and nations, and didst divide them into corners: so they possessed the land of Sihon, and the land of the king of Heshbon, and the land of Og king of Bashan. Their children also multipliedst thou as the stars of heaven, and broughtest them into the land, concerning which thou hadst promised to their fathers, that they should go in to possess it. ...Nevertheless they were disobedient, and rebelled against thee, and cast thy law behind their backs, and **slew thy prophets** which testified against them to turn them to thee, and they wrought great provocations. Therefore thou deliveredst them into the hand of their enemies, who vexed them: and in the time of their trouble, when they cried unto thee, thou heardest them from heaven; and according to thy **manifold mercies** thou gavest them **saviours**, who saved them out of the hand of their enemies. But after they had rest, they **did evil again** before thee: therefore leftest thou them in the hand of their enemies, so that they had the dominion over them: yet when they returned, and cried unto thee, thou heardest them from heaven; and many times didst thou deliver them according to **thy mercies**...

NOTE: Though they forsook him, he **did not forsake them**, as justly he might have done, but continued his care of them and favour to them. Afterwards, when they were settled in Canaan and sold themselves by their sins into the hands of their enemies, upon their submission and humble request he *gave them saviours* (Nehemiah 9:27), the **judges**, by whom God wrought many a great deliverance for them when they were on the brink of ruin. This he did, **not for any merit of theirs**, for their deserved nothing but ill, but according to his mercies, his manifold mercies. (9.) The **admonitions** and **fair warnings** he gave them by his servants the prophets. When he delivered them from their troubles he *testified against their sins* (Nehemiah 9:28,29), that they might not misconstrue their deliverances as connivances at their wickedness. That which was designed in all the testimonies which the prophets bore against them was to bring them again to God's law, to lay their necks under its yoke, and walk by its rule. The end of our ministry is to bring people to God by bringing them to **his law**, not to bring them to ourselves by bringing them under any law of ours.

(Source: *The Matthew Henry Commentary on the whole Bible* classic.studylight.org/com/mhc)

Thought 1. In his letter to the Corinthians, Paul said the things they suffered were written for our warning, so that we'd be aware of the danger of giving in to these same temptations.

1 Corinthians 10:1-13, Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be **ignorant**, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all **baptized** unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; And did all **eat** the same spiritual meat; And did all **drink** the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that

spiritual Rock that followed them: and that **Rock** was **Christ**. But with many of them God was not well pleased : for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were **our examples**, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in **one day three** and **twenty thousand**. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye , as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. Now all these things happened unto them **for examples**: and they are written for our **admonition (warning)**, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. There hath no **temptation** taken you but such as is common to MAN: but **God is faithful**, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are **able**; but will with the temptation also make **a way** to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

***Nehemiah 9:30-31**, Yet many years didst thou forbear (treat with patience) them, and testifiedst against them by thy spirit in thy prophets: yet would they not give ear: therefore gavest thou them into the hand of the people of the lands. Nevertheless for thy great mercies' sake thou didst not utterly consume them, nor forsake them; for thou art a gracious and merciful God.*

NOTE: It is supposed that Nehemiah refers here principally to the ten tribes. And many years did God bear with them; not less than **two hundred** and **fifty-four years** from their separation from the house of David, till their captivity and utter dispersion under Shalmaneser; during the whole of which time God invariably warned them by his prophets; or, as it is here said, by thy Spirit in (upon) thy prophets, which gives us the true notion of Divine inspiration. God's Spirit was given to the prophets; and they testified to the people, according as they were taught and influenced by this Spirit. (Source: *The Adam Clarke Commentary* classic.studylight.org/com/acc/)

***Nehemiah 9:32-34**, Now therefore, our God, the great, the mighty, and the terrible God, who keepest covenant and mercy, let not all the trouble seem little before thee, that hath come upon us, on our kings, on our princes, and on our priests, and on our prophets, and on our fathers, and on all thy people, since the time of the kings of Assyria unto this day. Howbeit thou art **JUST** in all that is brought upon us; for thou hast done RIGHT, but we have **done wickedly**: Neither have our kings, our princes, our priests, nor our fathers, kept thy law, nor hearkened unto thy **commandments** and thy **testimonies**, wherewith thou didst testify against them.*

Thought 1. They're aware of the fact God ALWAYS keeps his Covenant with man. This is a source of JOY for our Father, when we really "KNOW" him. It'll also affect our MINDS.

Psalms 89:34, My **covenant** will I NOT break, nor **alter (change)** the thing that is gone out of my lips.

Jeremiah 9:23-24, But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he **understandeth** and **knoweth me**, that **I am the Lord** which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I **delight (have pleasure)**, saith the Lord.

***Nehemiah 9:35-38**, For they have not served thee in their kingdom, and in thy great goodness that thou gavest them, and in the large and fat land which thou gavest before them, neither turned they from their wicked works.*

*Behold, we are **servants** this day, and for the land that thou **gavest** unto our **fathers** to eat the fruit thereof and the good thereof, behold, we are servants in it: And it yieldeth much increase unto the kings whom thou hast set over us because of **our sins**: also they have dominion over our bodies, and over our cattle, at their pleasure, and we are in great distress. And because of all this we make a **sure covenant**, and write it; and our princes, Levites, and priests, **seal** unto it.*

Thought 1. Because of their humility and faith, we know heard this prayer.