

The Book of Nehemiah
Chapters 8-9
*The Spirit of God, Working through the
Word of God, Brings Revival
Israel Confesses Their Sin*

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For Archived Class Notes

- You may download previous Class Notes at: <http://pastorhenry.posterous.com>

A. Hearing God's Word sparks revival.

- (1-3) The people gather and ask Ezra to read God's Word.
 - **From morning** is literally, "from the light."
 - They were willing to **sacrifice** something to hear it
- (4-6) How God's Word was received
 - Practical things
 - Right attitude towards God's Word

A. Hearing God's Word sparks revival.

- **3 immediate results:**
 - The people *thanked God*
 - by saying **Amen** when Ezra blessed the Lord
 - They prayed
 - by lifting up their hands
 - They worshipped
 - by bowing down before Him

Thanksgiving, prayer, and praise are all good measures of how the Spirit of God and Word of God are working in us.

A. Hearing God's Word sparks revival.

- (7-8) God's Word is presented so the people may understand.

B. Response to God's Word makes revival flow.

- (9-11) The people respond with weeping.
 - **2 Timothy 3:16-17** All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

B. Response to God's Word makes revival flow.

Even though it is a good thing to be sad under the conviction of the Holy Spirit through the Word of God; if the sense of conviction is greater than the sense that God is doing a good and holy work, then tears are not good.

B. Response to God's Word makes revival flow.

- Our knowledge of our sin should never be bigger than our knowledge of Jesus as our savior. We are great sinners, but He is a greater savior.

B. Response to God's Word makes revival flow.

- Therefore, *the joy of the Lord is your strength* - even when you are being convicted of sin. When we are convicted of sin we know that God is doing a work in us, so we can be glad and take joy.

B. Response to God's Word makes revival flow.

- Our emotions are not beyond our control; we can do God's will even when we don't feel like it.

B. Response to God's Word makes revival flow.

- (12) The people **choose** to rejoice.
 - They went away praising God, because understanding God's Word brings such a sweet sense of joy.
- (13) The leaders gather **for more study of God's Word.**
- (14-18) The people keep the Feast of Tabernacles.
 - Connection between gladness and obedience

**Nehemiah 9
Israel Confesses Their Sin**

- **A repentant nation gathers.**
 - (1) An assembly of humble repentance.
 - (2) An assembly to separate themselves
 - Sinning: Missing the mark (Archery)
 - Not all sin is the same, but all sin is sin.

Generational Curse?

- **Ezekiel 18:20** *he soul who sins is the one who will die*

Spurgeon on Repentance

- “**Repentance grows as faith grows.** Do not make any mistake about it; repentance is not a thing of days and weeks, a temporary penance to be got over as fast as possible! No it is the grace of a lifetime, like faith itself. Repentance is the inseparable companion of faith.”

B. The prayer of repentance.

- (5b-6) Praise to the God of all creation.
 - Reason to praise God
- (7-8) Praise to the God who chose Abraham and made a covenant with him and his descendants.

B. The prayer of repentance.

- (9-15) Praise to the God who delivered Israel from Egypt and provided for them in the wilderness.
 - Sign of revival: *reflection on the goodness of God*
- (16-17a) The sinful response of man to God's goodness.
 - Sign of revival: *recognition of our own sinfulness.*

B. The prayer of repentance.

- (17b-21) God's **gracious reply** to rebellious Israel.
 - Shows not how special Israel was,
 - but how special God is.

B. The prayer of repentance.

- (22-31) The **cycle** of Israel's relationship with God.
 - God's goodness → time of comfort and abundance, → then people turn from Him, → God brings correction,
 - Result: God's people turn back to Him, God then Blesses them.
 - Cycle repeats

B. The prayer of repentance.

- We sometimes feel as if God has gotten tired of us; that we can't ask him to forgive us for something He has forgiven us for so many times before. But God never gets tired of us, and never turns away the repentant heart.

B. The prayer of repentance.

- (32-37) A plea to God for intervention.
 - **Nehemiah 9:33** *In all that has happened to us, you have been just; you have acted faithfully, while we did wrong.*
 - True **Confession recognizes that God is right and we are wrong** Confession is agreeing with God about both things.
- (38) Conclusion: a point of decision.
 - Sign of Revival: *renewal of our obedience.*

Application

- **What about my relationship with men?**
 - Am I consciously or unconsciously creating the impression that I am a better man than I really am?
 - Is there the least suspicion of hypocrisy in my life?
 - Am I honest in all my words and acts? Do I exaggerate?
 - Am I reliable? Can I be trusted?
 - Do I confidentially pass on what was told to me in confidence?
 - Do I grumble and complain in the church?
 - Am I jealous, impure, irritable, touchy, distrustful?
 - Am I self-conscious, self-pitying, or self-justifying?
 - Am I proud? Do I thank God I am not as other people?
 - Is there anyone I fear, or dislike, or criticize, or resent? If so, what am I doing about it?

Application

- **What about my devotion to God?**
 - Does the Bible live to me? Do I give it time to speak to me?
 - Am I enjoying my prayer life today? Did I enjoy it this morning?
 - When I am involved in a problem in life, do I talk about it or pray about it?
 - Am I disobeying God in anything, or insisting upon doing something about which my conscience is very uneasy?
 - When did I last speak to someone else with the object of trying to win him for Christ?
 - Am I a slave to books, dress, friends, work, or what others think?
 - How do I spend my spare time?

Announcement

- Please read Nehemiah 10 for next week