

Nehemiah 9

New King James Version (NKJV)

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The People Confess Their Sins

1 Now on the twenty-fourth day of this month the children of Israel were assembled with fasting, in sackcloth, and with dust on their heads.[a] 2 Then those of Israelite lineage separated themselves from all foreigners; and they stood and confessed their sins and the iniquities of their fathers. 3 And they stood up in their place and read from the Book of the Law of the LORD their God for one-fourth of the day; and for another fourth they confessed and worshiped the LORD their God.

4 Then Jeshua, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, and Chenani stood on the stairs of the Levites and cried out with a loud voice to the LORD their God. 5 And the Levites, Jeshua, Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabniah, Sherebiah, Hodijah, Shebaniah, and Pethahiah, said:

“Stand up and bless the LORD your God
Forever and ever!

“ Blessed be Your glorious name,
Which is exalted above all blessing and praise!

6 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.

7 “You are the LORD God,
Who chose Abram,
And brought him out of Ur of the Chaldeans,
And gave him the name Abraham;

8 You found his heart faithful before You,
And made a covenant with him
To give the land of the Canaanites,
The Hittites, the Amorites,
The Perizzites, the Jebusites,
And the Girgashites—
To give it to his descendants.
You have performed Your words,
For You are righteous.

9 “You saw the affliction of our fathers in Egypt,
And heard their cry by the Red Sea.

10 You showed signs and wonders against Pharaoh,
Against all his servants,
And against all the people of his land.
For You knew that they acted proudly against them.
So You made a name for Yourself, as it is this day.

11 And You divided the sea before them,

So that they went through the midst of the sea on the dry land;

And their persecutors You threw into the deep,
As a stone into the mighty waters.

12 Moreover You led them by day with a cloudy pillar,
And by night with a pillar of fire,
To give them light on the road
Which they should travel.

13 “You came down also on Mount Sinai,
And spoke with them from heaven,
And gave them just ordinances and true laws,
Good statutes and commandments.

14 You made known to them Your holy Sabbath,
And commanded them precepts, statutes and laws,
By the hand of Moses Your servant.

15 You gave them bread from heaven for their hunger,
And brought them water out of the rock for their thirst,
And told them to go in to possess the land
Which You had sworn to give them.

16 “But they and our fathers acted proudly,
Hardened their necks,
And did not heed Your commandments.

17 They refused to obey,
And they were not mindful of Your wonders
That You did among them.

But they hardened their necks,
And in their rebellion[b]
They appointed a leader
To return to their bondage.
But You are God,
Ready to pardon,
Gracious and merciful,
Slow to anger,
Abundant in kindness,
And did not forsake them.

18 “Even when they made a molded calf for themselves,
And said, ‘This is your god
That brought you up out of Egypt,’
And worked great provocations,

19 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.

20 You also gave Your good Spirit to instruct them,
And did not withhold Your manna from their mouth,
And gave them water for their thirst.

21 Forty years You sustained them in the wilderness;
They lacked nothing;
Their clothes did not wear out[c]

And their feet did not swell.

22 “ Moreover You gave them kingdoms and nations,
And divided them into districts.[d]
So they took possession of the land of Sihon,
The land of[e] the king of Heshbon,
And the land of Og king of Bashan.

23 You also multiplied their children as the stars of heaven,
And brought them into the land
Which You had told their fathers
To go in and possess.

24 So the people went in
And possessed the land;
You subdued before them the inhabitants of the land,
The Canaanites,
And gave them into their hands,
With their kings
And the people of the land,
That they might do with them as they wished.

25 And they took strong cities and a rich land,
And possessed houses full of all goods,
Cisterns already dug, vineyards, olive groves,
And fruit trees in abundance.
So they ate and were filled and grew fat,
And delighted themselves in Your great goodness.

26 “ Nevertheless they were disobedient
And rebelled against You,

Cast Your law behind their backs
And killed Your prophets, who testified against them
To turn them to Yourself;
And they worked great provocations.

27 Therefore You delivered them into the hand of their enemies,

Who oppressed them;
And in the time of their trouble,
When they cried to You,
You heard from heaven;
And according to Your abundant mercies
You gave them deliverers who saved them
From the hand of their enemies.

28 “But after they had rest,

They again did evil before You.
Therefore You left them in the hand of their enemies,
So that they had dominion over them;
Yet when they returned and cried out to You,
You heard from heaven;
And many times You delivered them according to Your

mercies,

29 And testified against them,

That You might bring them back to Your law.
Yet they acted proudly,
And did not heed Your commandments,
But sinned against Your judgments,

‘ Which if a man does, he shall live by them.’[f]

And they shrugged their shoulders,
Stiffened their necks,
And would not hear.

30 Yet for many years You had patience with them,
And testified against them by Your Spirit in Your
prophets.

Yet they would not listen;
Therefore You gave them into the hand of the peoples of
the lands.

31 Nevertheless in Your great mercy
You did not utterly consume them nor forsake them;
For You are God, gracious and merciful.

32 “Now therefore, our God,
The great, the mighty, and awesome God,
Who keeps covenant and mercy:
Do not let all the trouble seem small before You
That has come upon us,
Our kings and our princes,
Our priests and our prophets,
Our fathers and on all Your people,
From the days of the kings of Assyria until this day.

33 However You are just in all that has befallen us;
For You have dealt faithfully,
But we have done wickedly.

34 Neither our kings nor our princes,
Our priests nor our fathers,

Have kept Your law,
Nor heeded Your commandments and Your testimonies,
With which You testified against them.

35 For they have not served You in their kingdom,
Or in the many good things that You gave them,
Or in the large and rich land which You set before them;
Nor did they turn from their wicked works.

36 “Here we are, servants today!
And the land that You gave to our fathers,
To eat its fruit and its bounty,
Here we are, servants in it!

37 And it yields much increase to the kings
You have set over us,
Because of our sins;
Also they have dominion over our bodies and our cattle
At their pleasure;
And we are in great distress.

38 “And because of all this,
We make a sure covenant and write it;
Our leaders, our Levites, and our priests seal it.”