### Nehemiah

## Chapter 9

1Well, it was on the 24th day of the month that the sons of IsraEl had gathered to fast wearing sackcloth and with ashes on their heads.  
  
2Then, after separating the foreigners from among themselves, they all stood and openly confessed their sins and the lawbreaking of their ancestors.  
  
3They each took their positions, as the scroll of the Law of their God Jehovah was being read over the next 4 days, and they were each speaking openly to Jehovah and bowing before the Lord, their God.  
  
4All the while, the Levites (JeShua, son of KadmiEl; plus SecheniJah, son of SherebiJah and grandson of ChenAni) were standing on All the while, the Levites (JeShua, son of KadmiEl; plus SecheniJah, son of SherebiJah and grandson of ChenAni) were standing on <span class="placename">the ascentAll the while, the Levites (JeShua, son of KadmiEl; plus SecheniJah, son of SherebiJah and grandson of ChenAni) were standing on <span class="placename">the ascent</span> calling out loudly to their God Jehovah.  
  
5Then the Levites (JeShua, KadmiEl, Bani, SherebiJah, HodiJah, SecheniJah, and PethahiJah) said to the people:  
  
 ‘Stand up and praise Jehovah that’s been our God throughout the ages and into the ages of ages!  
  
 ‘Praise His glorious Name and raise it high with blessings and praises!’  
  
6Then Ezra said:  
  
 ‘O our only Lord,  
  
 ‘It was You who made the skies and the heavens above the skies!  
  
 ‘You’re the One who put everything in its position… The land and all that’s on it, the seas and everything that’s in them, and You gave life to everything... So to You, all the armies of the heavens must bow.  
  
 7‘O Jehovah our God,  
  
 ‘It was You who chose Abram and led him out of the [land] of the Chaldeans; then You changed his name to ‘AbraHam,’ 8because You found his heart worthy before You.  
  
 ‘And You concluded a Sacred Agreement with him, promising to give the land of the CanaAnites, Hittites, Amorites, Pherezites, Jebusites, and Gergesites to his offspring…  
  
 ‘And then You did what You said You’d do, because You are righteous.  
  
 9‘And when You saw how our ancestors were being humiliated in Egypt and You heard their cries at the ‘And when You saw how our ancestors were being humiliated in Egypt and You heard their cries at the <span class="placename">Red Sea‘And when You saw how our ancestors were being humiliated in Egypt and You heard their cries at the <span class="placename">Red Sea</span>, 10You sent signs and miracles to the PharaOh of Egypt on their behalf and to all his servants and all the people of his land, because You saw how [the Egyptians] were dominating them.  
  
 ‘Then You made a Name for Yourself that has lasted to this day!  
  
 11‘For You ripped open the sea before them and threw those who were chasing them to the bottom of that sea – like stones in turbulent waters!  
  
 12‘And after that, You guided them with a column of clouds by day and by a column of fire by night… To light their way as they followed behind it.  
  
 13‘And on Mount SinAi, You went down and spoke to them from out of the sky and You gave them Your righteous Commandments, Laws of truth, orders, and good [instructions], 14as You explained to them about Your Holy Sabbath, [which had been written about] among the Commandments, orders, and Laws that You gave to them by the hands of Your servant Moses.  
  
 15‘Then You sent them bread from heaven as their provisions, and You brought water out of a rock to quench their thirst.  
  
 ‘Thereafter, You spoke to them and told them to enter and inherit the land that You stretched out Your hand to give them…  
  
 16‘But our ancestors were too proud. They stiffened their necks and refused to listen to Your Commandments… 17They shook their heads and refused to listen, because they forgot the wonders that You had just performed among them!  
  
 ‘And although You [could have] appointed a leader to return them to their slavery in Egypt, since they’d stiffened their necks... Because You, O God, are merciful, compassionate, lenient, and filled with patience when it comes to forgiving sins, You didn’t abandon them.  
  
 18‘But then they molded a calf for themselves and said:  
  
 ‘This is our God who led us out of Egypt!’  
  
 ‘...which made You very angry.  
  
 19‘However, in Your great compassion, You didn’t abandon them in the desert or remove the column of clouds that guided them on their way during the day, or the column of fire that lit their way during the night! 20With Your beautiful Breath, You made them understand, and You didn’t withhold Your manna from their mouths or the water that You gave them to quench their thirst.  
  
 21‘Thereafter, You fed them in the desert for 40 years, and they lacked nothing, because their clothes didn’t become old and their sandals didn’t wear out. 22And You gave them kingdoms… You divided the people from among them, and they inherited the land of SeOn the king of HeshBon, and the land of Og the king of BaShan.  
  
 23‘And all the while, You multiplied their sons as the stars in the skies, and You brought them into the land that You told their ancestors they would enter and inherit.  
  
 24‘Then, after their sons entered and inherited the land, You wiped out those who’d lived in the land before them. You gave the CanaAnites into their hands, both their kings and the people of the land, to do whatever they saw fit with them.  
  
 25‘There, they conquered cities with high walls and entered a fertile land, where they inherited houses that were already furnished, as well as quarries, vineyards, olive groves, and plenty of things to eat.  
  
 ‘So they ate until they were full and fat, as they indulged in Your goodness.  
  
 26‘But then they changed and rebelled against You… They threw away Your Laws and killed the Prophets whom You sent as witnesses and to turn them back to You, which made You extremely angry.  
  
 27‘So You handed them over to those who oppressed them... And as they were being oppressed, they called out to You in their time of need, and You again heard them from Your heavens.  
  
 ‘Then in Your great compassion, You saved them and delivered them from those who were oppressing them, 28and You allowed them to rest.  
  
 ‘But then they turned around and started acting wickedly before You once more; So You abandoned them into the hands of their enemies, who started ruling over them.  
  
 ‘And they once again yelled out to You, and once again You listened from the heavens and rescued them, because of Your great compassion; 29and You advised them to return to Your Law.  
  
 ‘However, they acted superior and they wouldn’t listen to Your Commandments and judgments that bring life to a man… And they kept on sinning! They turned their backs and refused to be persuaded… They stiffened their necks and just wouldn’t listen.  
  
 30‘But You put up with them for many years, until Your patience finally ran out. Then, through Your Breath, You warned them by the hands of Your Prophets, before handing them over to the people of the land.  
  
 31‘Yet, in Your great compassion, You didn’t destroy them or abandon them… You were strong and merciful, and You felt pity.  
  
 32‘And now, O our strong, great, fearsome, and mighty God who is merciful and guards His Sacred Agreement; Don’t allow all the troubles that have found us, our kings, our rulers, our Priests, our Prophets, our fathers, and all Your people since the days of the kings of Assyria down to this day, to go unnoticed.  
  
 33‘For You have been just when it comes to all the things that have happened to us. You have acted righteously while we were being led into sin.  
  
 34‘For our kings, rulers, Priests, and our fathers didn’t obey Your Laws or pay attention to Your Commandments and the things that You testified to them! 35Yet, they continued to live in Your kingdom, enjoying the abundant goodness that You gave to them, and they [inherited] the wide and beautiful land that You had set before them.  
  
 ‘However, they still wouldn’t serve You or turn from their wicked ways.  
  
 36‘But look!  
  
 ‘We are Your servants today in this land that You gave to our ancestors, so that we might eat its fruit and enjoy its good things. Look… We are Your servants here!  
  
 37‘Yet, the abundant fruitage of this land now belongs to the kings who were put over us because of our sins – as were our bodies and our cattle – to do whatever they pleased.  
  
 ‘So we are extremely oppressed, 38and we’re entrusting these things [to You].  
  
 ‘We’ve written all of this down, and now our rulers, Levites, and Priests will put their seal upon it.’