

Nehemiah 9:2; Nehemiah 9:6-7; Nehemiah 9:9-10; Nehemiah 9:30-36 (New International Version 2011)

² Those of Israelite descent had separated themselves from all foreigners. They stood in their places and confessed their sins and the sins of their ancestors.

⁶ You alone are the LORD. You made the heavens, even the highest heavens, and all their starry host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. You give life to everything, and the multitudes of heaven worship you.

⁷ “You are the LORD God, who chose Abram and brought him out of Ur of the Chaldeans and named him Abraham.

⁹ “You saw the suffering of our ancestors in Egypt; you heard their cry at the Red Sea

¹⁰ You sent signs and wonders against Pharaoh, against all his officials and all the people of his land, for you knew how arrogantly the Egyptians treated them. You made a name for yourself, which remains to this day.

³⁰ For many years you were patient with them. By your Spirit you warned them through your prophets. Yet they paid no attention, so you gave them into the hands of the neighboring peoples.

³¹ But in your great mercy you did not put an end to them or abandon them, for you are a gracious and merciful God.

³² “Now therefore, our God, the great God, mighty and awesome, who keeps his covenant of love, do not let all this hardship seem trifling in your eyes—the hardship that has come on us, on our kings and leaders, on our priests and prophets, on our ancestors and all your people, from the days of the kings of Assyria until today.

³³ In all that has happened to us, you have remained righteous; you have acted faithfully, while we acted wickedly.

³⁴ Our kings, our leaders, our priests and our ancestors did not follow your law; they did not pay attention to your commands or the statutes you warned them to keep.

³⁵ Even while they were in their kingdom, enjoying your great goodness to them in the spacious and fertile land you gave them, they did not serve you or turn from their evil ways.

³⁶ “But see, we are slaves today, slaves in the land you gave our ancestors so they could eat its fruit and the other good things it produces.

Good Morning my Sisters and Brothers in Christ. I was glad when they said unto me let us go into the house of the Lord. If you are also glad to be in the Lord's house this morning, I invite you to stand on your feet, make some noise and celebrate all that the Lord has done for you.

We are continuing with our study of Nehemiah this morning. Our background scripture is the entire 9th chapter and we have isolated those verses that provide the essence of the story. Once again we are searching for a 21st century application within the story of the return of the Children of Israel to the Promised Land.

If you have done your reading you know that the 9th chapter of both Ezra and Nehemiah contain prayers of confession of sin. In particular, the confession of the collective sins of the people which, lead to the Babylonian Captivity and the loss of their land and freedom. Although Nehemiah records these prayers it is Ezra that leads the people in prayer.

For most of last year and a portion of this year the Adult Bible Study class has studied prayer. In fact our 2012 theme was Transformed by the Spirit Through Prayer. We studied many and varied forms of prayer from the viewpoints of many authors. We discussed that we

- should spend time addressing the one to whom we pray
- should be specific in our prayers
- asking God for exactly what we want
- we studied the importance on being unceasing with our prayers
- we need to know that while we claim the promise that anything we ask in the name of Jesus will be given to us
- our prayers must also be in keeping with the will of God.

We also reviewed that we needed to be in right standing with our sisters and brothers if we were going to ask God for anything. And of course we reviewed again the need to confess our sins and ask for forgiveness.

There is much that we can learn from the scholars with regard to prayer. But there are also lessons to be learned by studying prayers

recorded in scripture. With that as background will you pray with me and for me as I ask: **HOW DO I GET RIGHT WITH GOD?**

SHALL WE PRAY! God of heaven and earth we are here in your house. We have prayed, we have sang, and we have brought our tithes and offering into the storehouse. Now we ask that you allow us to experience the blessings of the Holy Spirit. Please allow us to hear from heaven so that we will have something to help us during the coming week. Father, I ask that you use the words, the meditations and the prayers of my heart to feed your people this morning. In the name of your Son, Jesus the Christ we pray.

HOW DO I GET RIGHT WITH GOD?

The Children of Israel needed to get right with God. Their sins were many:

- *they paid no attention*
- *while we acted wickedly*
- *they did not serve you or turn from their evil ways.*

Although we may not be guilty of their specific sins, if we are honest we can probably remember a time when **we paid no attention to the**

Word of God:

- we failed to honor our parents with our sneaky disobedience
- we failed to keep the Sabbath holy because Sunday was the only day we had to do laundry, work in the yard or wash the car
- we failed to be content with what we had but wished for what our neighbors have

we acted wickedly

- lying is wicked
- thoughts can be wicked
- sexual sins are wicked

we failed to serve God

- tithes and offerings
- talent and time
- praise and worship

we failed to turn from our evil ways

- attend VBS, BS, SS and church where we hear the word but it does not change our hearts or our actions
- only attend Sunday worship and that may not be enough info to change our hearts

If you are willing to admit some of us might need to find out

HOW DO I GET RIGHT WITH GOD

Plenty of scripture that instruct us on how to get right with God

*if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and **pray** and seek my face **and turn** from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I **will forgive their sin** and will heal their land. (2 Chronicles 7:14)*

*If **you declare with your mouth**, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your **mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.** (Romans 10:9-10)*

*If **we confess our sins**, he is faithful and just and will **forgive us our sins** and purify us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9)*

Did you notice that each example had some common elements?

- prayer
 - turning from evil ways
 - declaring and believing
 - confession
- ✓ I have shared with you how the Children of Israel got right with God.
 - ✓ I have read Old and New Testament scriptures that provide examples of the outcome of getting right.
 - ✓ Now I want to put it altogether in a way that I pray will stay with you for a little while.

HOW DO I GET RIGHT WITH GOD?

PRAYERS

P Praise God –

- for being God –
- for what God is in your life –
- from everlasting – to everlasting

Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. (Psa 150:6)

R Read God's Word

- Daily Bible reading
- Upper Room
- Daily Meditation

¹⁵Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. (2 Timothy 2:15)

¹⁵Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (KJV)

**A Acknowledge your Sins
not my sins
not a family member, spouse, or child's
work on your sins**

⁸He has shown you, O mortal, what is good.

And what does the LORD require of you?

To act justly and to love mercy

and to walk humbly^[8] with your God.

Y You and Others

¹⁶Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

**E Eagerly
Thy kingdom come...**

R Rejoice

**S Spend some time with God
if I never had a problem
live the life I sing about in my song
in thee O lord I place my trust – let me never be put to
confusion
all my help comes from the maker of heaven and earth**