

Sunday, August 14, 2022

From Darren:

Nehemiah 7:73b-9:21 — What an emotional time that obviously was to hear the law of God and realize you had been doing it wrong, albeit out of ignorance, your entire life

Ps 33:12-22 — “He made their hearts, so he understands everything they do”

Pro 21:11-12 — Discipline brings wisdom...call back to Chap. 1

1 Corinthians 9:1-18 — “How terrible for me if I didn’t preach the Good News!”

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Nehemiah 7:73-9:21

7 73b In October, when the Israelites had settled in their towns,

8 1 all the people assembled with a unified purpose at the square just inside the Water Gate. They asked Ezra the scribe to bring out the Book of the Law of Moses, which the LORD had given for Israel to obey.

2 So on October 8 Ezra the priest brought the Book of the Law before the assembly, which included the men and women and all the children old enough to understand.

3 He faced the square just inside the Water Gate from early morning until noon and read aloud to everyone who could understand. All the people listened closely to the Book of the Law.

4 Ezra the scribe stood on a high wooden platform that had been made for the occasion. To his right stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiah, and Maaseiah. To his left stood Pedaiah, Mishael, Malkijah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, and Meshullam.

5 Ezra stood on the platform in full view of all the people. When they saw him open the book, they all rose to their feet.

6 Then Ezra praised the LORD, the great God, and all the people chanted, “Amen! Amen!” as they lifted their hands. Then they bowed down and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground.

7 The Levites—Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, and Pelaiiah—then instructed the people in the Law while everyone remained in their places.

8 They read from the Book of the Law of God and clearly explained the meaning of what was being read, helping the people understand each passage.

9 Then Nehemiah the governor, Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who were interpreting for the people said to them, “Don’t mourn or weep on such a day as this! For today is a sacred day before the LORD your God.” For the people had all been weeping as they listened to the words of the Law.

10 And Nehemiah continued, “Go and celebrate with a feast of rich foods and sweet drinks, and share gifts of food with people who have nothing prepared. This is a sacred day before our Lord. Don’t be dejected and sad, for the joy of the LORD is your strength!”

11 And the Levites, too, quieted the people, telling them, “Hush! Don’t weep! For this is a sacred day.”

12 So the people went away to eat and drink at a festive meal, to share gifts of food, and to celebrate with great joy because they had heard God’s words and understood them.

13 On October 9 the family leaders of all the people, together with the priests and Levites, met with Ezra the scribe to go over the Law in greater detail.

14 As they studied the Law, they discovered that the LORD had commanded through Moses that the Israelites should live in shelters during the festival to be held that month.

15 He had said that a proclamation should be made throughout their towns and in Jerusalem, telling the people to go to the hills to get branches from olive, wild olive, myrtle, palm, and other leafy trees. They were to use these branches to make shelters in which they would live during the festival, as prescribed in the Law.

16 So the people went out and cut branches and used them to build shelters on the roofs of their houses, in their courtyards, in the courtyards of God's Temple, or in the squares just inside the Water Gate and the Ephraim Gate.

17 So everyone who had returned from captivity lived in these shelters during the festival, and they were all filled with great joy! The Israelites had not celebrated like this since the days of Joshua son of Nun.

18 Ezra read from the Book of the Law of God on each of the seven days of the festival. Then on the eighth day they held a solemn assembly, as was required by law.

9 1 On October 31 the people assembled again, and this time they fasted and dressed in burlap and sprinkled dust on their heads.

2 Those of Israelite descent separated themselves from all foreigners as they confessed their own sins and the sins of their ancestors.

3 They remained standing in place for three hours while the Book of the Law of the LORD their God was read aloud to them. Then for three more hours they confessed their sins and worshiped the LORD their God.

4 The Levites—Jeshua, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, and Kenani—stood on the stairway of the Levites and cried out to the LORD their God with loud voices.

5 Then the leaders of the Levites—Jeshua, Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabneiah, Sherebiah, Hodiah, Shebaniah, and Pethahiah—called out to the people: "Stand up and praise the LORD your God, for he lives from everlasting to everlasting!" Then they prayed: "May your glorious name be praised! May it be exalted above all blessing and praise!

6 "You alone are the LORD . You made the skies and the heavens and all the stars. You made the earth and the seas and everything in them. You preserve them all, and the angels of heaven worship you.

7 "You are the LORD God, who chose Abram and brought him from Ur of the Chaldeans and renamed him Abraham.

8 When he had proved himself faithful, you made a covenant with him to give him and his descendants the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Jebusites, and Girgashites. And you have done what you promised, for you are always true to your word.

9 "You saw the misery of our ancestors in Egypt, and you heard their cries from beside the Red Sea.

10 You displayed miraculous signs and wonders against Pharaoh, his officials, and all his people, for you knew how arrogantly they were treating our ancestors. You have a glorious reputation that has never been forgotten.

11 You divided the sea for your people so they could walk through on dry land! And then you hurled their enemies into the depths of the sea. They sank like stones beneath the mighty waters.

12 You led our ancestors by a pillar of cloud during the day and a pillar of fire at night so that they could find their way.

13 "You came down at Mount Sinai and spoke to them from heaven. You gave them regulations and instructions that were just, and decrees and commands that were good.

14 You instructed them concerning your holy Sabbath. And you commanded them, through Moses your servant, to obey all your commands, decrees, and instructions.

15 “You gave them bread from heaven when they were hungry and water from the rock when they were thirsty. You commanded them to go and take possession of the land you had sworn to give them.

16 “But our ancestors were proud and stubborn, and they paid no attention to your commands.

17 They refused to obey and did not remember the miracles you had done for them. Instead, they became stubborn and appointed a leader to take them back to their slavery in Egypt. But you are a God of forgiveness, gracious and merciful, slow to become angry, and rich in unfailing love. You did not abandon them,

18 even when they made an idol shaped like a calf and said, ‘This is your god who brought you out of Egypt!’ They committed terrible blasphemies.

19 “But in your great mercy you did not abandon them to die in the wilderness. The pillar of cloud still led them forward by day, and the pillar of fire showed them the way through the night.

20 You sent your good Spirit to instruct them, and you did not stop giving them manna from heaven or water for their thirst.

21 For forty years you sustained them in the wilderness, and they lacked nothing. Their clothes did not wear out, and their feet did not swell!

Psalm 33:12-22

33 12 What joy for the nation whose God is the LORD, whose people he has chosen as his inheritance.

13 The LORD looks down from heaven and sees the whole human race.

14 From his throne he observes all who live on the earth.

15 He made their hearts, so he understands everything they do.

16 The best-equipped army cannot save a king, nor is great strength enough to save a warrior.

17 Don’t count on your warhorse to give you victory— for all its strength, it cannot save you.

18 But the LORD watches over those who fear him, those who rely on his unfailing love.

19 He rescues them from death and keeps them alive in times of famine.

20 We put our hope in the LORD . He is our help and our shield.

21 In him our hearts rejoice, for we trust in his holy name.

22 Let your unfailing love surround us, LORD, for our hope is in you alone.

Proverbs 21:11-12

21 11 If you punish a mocker, the simpleminded become wise; if you instruct the wise, they will be all the wiser.

12 The Righteous One knows what is going on in the homes of the wicked; he will bring disaster on them.

1 Corinthians 9:1-18

9 1 Am I not as free as anyone else? Am I not an apostle? Haven’t I seen Jesus our Lord with my own eyes? Isn’t it because of my work that you belong to the Lord?

2 Even if others think I am not an apostle, I certainly am to you. You yourselves are proof that I am the Lord’s apostle.

3 This is my answer to those who question my authority.

- 4 Don't we have the right to live in your homes and share your meals?
- 5 Don't we have the right to bring a believing wife with us as the other apostles and the Lord's brothers do, and as Peter does?
- 6 Or is it only Barnabas and I who have to work to support ourselves?
- 7 What soldier has to pay his own expenses? What farmer plants a vineyard and doesn't have the right to eat some of its fruit? What shepherd cares for a flock of sheep and isn't allowed to drink some of the milk?
- 8 Am I expressing merely a human opinion, or does the law say the same thing?
- 9 For the law of Moses says, "You must not muzzle an ox to keep it from eating as it treads out the grain." Was God thinking only about oxen when he said this?
- 10 Wasn't he actually speaking to us? Yes, it was written for us, so that the one who plows and the one who threshes the grain might both expect a share of the harvest.
- 11 Since we have planted spiritual seed among you, aren't we entitled to a harvest of physical food and drink?
- 12 If you support others who preach to you, shouldn't we have an even greater right to be supported? But we have never used this right. We would rather put up with anything than be an obstacle to the Good News about Christ.
- 13 Don't you realize that those who work in the temple get their meals from the offerings brought to the temple? And those who serve at the altar get a share of the sacrificial offerings.
- 14 In the same way, the Lord ordered that those who preach the Good News should be supported by those who benefit from it.
- 15 Yet I have never used any of these rights. And I am not writing this to suggest that I want to start now. In fact, I would rather die than lose my right to boast about preaching without charge.
- 16 Yet preaching the Good News is not something I can boast about. I am compelled by God to do it. How terrible for me if I didn't preach the Good News!
- 17 If I were doing this on my own initiative, I would deserve payment. But I have no choice, for God has given me this sacred trust.
- 18 What then is my pay? It is the opportunity to preach the Good News without charging anyone. That's why I never demand my rights when I preach the Good News.