

EXILE AND RETURN Lesson 26

FIRST DAY

Read Lesson 25 Notes

SECOND DAY:

Read Nehemiah: 9:1-21

The Israelites Confess Their Sins

[9:1] On the twenty-fourth day of the same month, the Israelites gathered together, fasting and wearing sackcloth and having dust on their heads. [2] Those of Israelite descent had separated themselves from all foreigners. They stood in their places and confessed their sins and the wickedness of their fathers. [3] They stood where they were and read from the Book of the Law of the LORD their God for a quarter of the day, and spent another quarter in confession and in worshipping the LORD their God. [4] Standing on the stairs were the Levites—Jeshua, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani and Kenani—who called with loud voices to the LORD their God. [5] And the Levites—Jeshua, Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabneiah, Sherebiah, Hodia, Shebaniah and Pethahiah—said: “Stand up and praise the LORD your God, who is from everlasting to everlasting.”

“Blessed be your glorious name, and may it be exalted above all blessing and praise. [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. [8] You found his heart faithful to you, and you made a covenant with him to give to his descendants the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Jebusites and Girgashites. You have kept your promise because you are righteous.

[9] “You saw the suffering of our forefathers in Egypt; you heard their cry at the Red Sea. [10] You sent miraculous 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. [11] You divided the sea before them, so that they passed through it on dry ground, but you hurled their pursuers into the depths, like a stone into mighty waters. [12] By day you led them with a pillar of cloud, and by night with a pillar of fire to give them light on the way they were to take.

[13] “You came down on Mount Sinai; you spoke to them from heaven. You gave them regulations and laws that are just and right, and decrees and commands that are good. [14] You made known to them your holy Sabbath and gave them commands, decrees and laws through your servant Moses. [15] In their hunger you gave them bread from heaven and in their thirst you brought them water from the rock; you told them to go in and take possession of the land you had sworn with uplifted hand to give them.

[16] “But they, our forefathers, became arrogant and stiff-necked, and did not obey your commands. [17] They refused to listen and failed to remember the miracles you performed among them. They became stiff-necked and in their rebellion appointed a leader in order to return to their slavery. But you are a forgiving God, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love. Therefore you did not desert them, [18] even when they cast for themselves an image of a calf and said, ‘This is your god, who brought you up out of Egypt,’ or when they committed awful blasphemies.

[19] “Because of your great compassion you did not abandon them in the desert. By day the pillar of cloud did not cease to guide them on their path, nor the pillar of fire by night to shine on the way they were to take. [20] You gave your good Spirit to instruct them. You did not withhold your manna from their mouths, and you gave them water for their thirst. [21] For forty years you sustained them in the desert; they lacked nothing, their clothes did not wear out nor did their feet become swollen.

Question 4b

Romans 15:4; [4] For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

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THIRD Day:

Read Nehemiah 9:22-38

[22] “You gave them kingdoms and nations, allotting to them even the remotest frontiers. They took over the country of Sihon king of Heshbon and the country of Og king of Bashan. [23] You made their sons as numerous as the stars in the sky, and you brought them into the land that you told their fathers to enter and possess. [24] Their sons went in and took possession of the land. You subdued before them the Canaanites, who lived in the land; you handed the Canaanites over to them, along with their kings and the peoples of the land, to deal with them as they pleased. [25] They captured fortified cities and fertile land; they took possession of houses filled with all kinds of good things, wells already dug, vineyards, olive groves and fruit trees in abundance. They ate to the full and were well-nourished; they reveled in your great goodness.

[26] “But they were disobedient and rebelled against you; they put your law behind their backs. They killed your prophets, who had admonished them in order to turn them back to you; they committed awful blasphemies. [27] So you handed them over to their enemies, who oppressed them. But when they were oppressed they cried out to you. From heaven you heard them, and in your great compassion you gave them deliverers, who rescued them from the hand of their enemies.

[28] “But as soon as they were at rest, they again did what was evil in your sight. Then you abandoned them to the hand of their enemies so that they ruled over them. And when they cried out to you again, you heard from heaven, and in your compassion you delivered them time after time.

[29] “You warned them to return to your law, but they became arrogant and disobeyed your commands. They sinned against your ordinances, by which a man will live if he obeys them. Stubbornly they turned their backs on you, became stiff-necked and refused to listen. [30] For many years you were patient with them. By your Spirit you admonished them through your prophets. Yet they paid no attention, so you handed them over to 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, O our God, the great, mighty and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love, do not let all this hardship seem trifling in your eyes—the hardship that has come upon us, upon our kings and leaders, upon our priests and prophets, upon our fathers and all your people, from the days of the kings of Assyria until today. [33] In all that has happened to us, you have been just; you have acted faithfully, while we did wrong. [34] Our kings, our leaders, our priests and our fathers did not follow your law; they did not pay attention to your commands or the warnings you gave them. [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 forefathers so they could eat its fruit and the other good things it produces. [37] Because of our sins, its abundant harvest goes to the kings you have placed over us. They rule over our bodies and our cattle as they please. We are in great distress.

The Agreement of the People

[38] “In view of all this, we are making a binding agreement, putting it in writing, and our leaders, our Levites and our priests are affixing their seals to it.”

FOURTH DAY

Read Nehemiah 10:1-29

[10:1] Those who sealed it were:
Nehemiah the governor, the son of Hacaliah,
Zedekiah, [2] Seraiah, Azariah, Jeremiah,
[3] Pashhur, Amariah, Malkijah,
[4] Hattush, Shebaniah, Malluch,
[5] Harim, Meremoth, Obadiah,
[6] Daniel, Ginnethon, Baruch,
[7] Meshullam, Abijah, Mijamin,
[8] Maaziah, Bilgai and Shemaiah.
These were the priests.

[9] The Levites:
Jeshua son of Azaniah, Binnui of the sons of
Henadad, Kadmiel,

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[10] and their associates: Shebaniah,
Hodiah, Kelita, Pelaiah, Hanan,
[11] Mica, Rehob, Hashabiah,
[12] Zaccur, Sherebiah, Shebaniah,
[13] Hodiah, Bani and Beninu.
[14] The leaders of the people:
Parosh, Pahath-Moab, Elam, Zattu, Bani,
[15] Bunni, Azgad, Bebai,
[16] Adonijah, Bigvai, Adin,
[17] Ater, Hezekiah, Azzur,
[18] Hodiah, Hashum, Bezai,
[19] Hariph, Anathoth, Nebai,
[20] Magpiash, Meshullam, Hezir,
[21] Meshezabel, Zadok, Jaddua,
[22] Pelatiah, Hanan, Anaiah,
[23] Hoshea, Hananiah, Hasshub,
[24] Hallohesh, Pilha, Shobek,
[25] Rehum, Hashabnah, Maaseiah,
[26] Ahiah, Hanan, Anan,
[27] Malluch, Harim and Baanah.

[28] “The rest of the people—priests, Levites, gatekeepers, singers, temple servants and all who separated themselves from the neighboring peoples for the sake of the Law of God, together with their wives and all their sons and daughters who are able to understand— [29] all these now join their brothers the nobles, and bind themselves with a curse and an oath to follow the Law of God given through Moses the servant of God and to obey carefully all the commands, regulations and decrees of the LORD our Lord.

Question 11

Ephesians 1:13-14; [13] And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, [14] who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.

Revelation 21:27; [27] Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

FIFTH DAY

Read Nehemiah 10:30-39

[30] “We promise not to give our daughters in marriage to the peoples around us or take their daughters for our sons.

[31] “When the neighboring peoples bring merchandise or grain to sell on the Sabbath, we will not buy from them on the Sabbath or on any holy day. Every seventh year we will forgo working the land and will cancel all debts.

[32] “We assume the responsibility for carrying out the commands to give a third of a shekel each year for the service of the house of our God: [33] for the bread set out on the table; for the regular grain offerings and burnt offerings; for the offerings on the Sabbaths, New Moon festivals and appointed feasts; for the holy offerings; for sin offerings to make atonement for Israel; and for all the duties of the house of our God.

[34] “We—the priests, the Levites and the people—have cast lots to determine when each of our families is to bring to the house of our God at set times each year a contribution of wood to burn on the altar of the LORD our God, as it is written in the Law.

[35] “We also assume responsibility for bringing to the house of the LORD each year the firstfruits of our crops and of every fruit tree.

[36] “As it is also written in the Law, we will bring the firstborn of our sons and of our cattle, of our herds and of our flocks to the house of our God, to the priests ministering there.

[37] “Moreover, we will bring to the storerooms of the house of our God, to the priests, the first of our ground meal, of our [grain] offerings, of the fruit of all our trees and of our new wine and oil. And we will bring a tithe of our crops to the Levites, for it is the Levites who collect the tithes in all the towns where we work. [38] A priest descended from Aaron is to accompany the Levites when they receive the tithes, and the Levites are to bring a tenth of the tithes up to the house of our God, to the storerooms of the treasury. [39] The people of Israel, including the Levites, are to bring their contributions of grain, new wine and oil to the storerooms where the articles for

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the sanctuary are kept and where the ministering priests, the gatekeepers and the singers stay.

“We will not neglect the house of our God.”

Question 12a

Leviticus 23:3; The Sabbath

[3] “There are six days when you may work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of rest, a day of sacred assembly. You are not to do any work; wherever you live, it is a Sabbath to the LORD.

Deuteronomy 7:3-4; [3] Do not intermarry with them. Do not give your daughters to their sons or take their daughters for your sons, [4] for they will turn your sons away from following me to serve other gods, and the LORD's anger will burn against you and will quickly destroy you.

SIXTH DAY:

Review Nehemiah 9-10

Nehemiah 9

The Israelites Confess Their Sins

[9:1] On the twenty-fourth day of the same month, the Israelites gathered together, fasting and wearing sackcloth and having dust on their heads. [2] Those of Israelite descent had separated themselves from all foreigners. They stood in their places and confessed their sins and the wickedness of their fathers. [3] They stood where they were and read from the Book of the Law of the LORD their God for a quarter of the day, and spent another quarter in confession and in worshiping the LORD their God. [4] Standing on the stairs were the Levites—Jeshua, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani and Kenani—who called with loud voices to the LORD their God. [5] And the Levites—Jeshua, Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabneiah, Sherebiah, Hodia, Shebaniah and

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[9] “You saw the suffering of our forefathers in Egypt; you heard their cry at the Red Sea. [10] You sent miraculous 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. [11] You divided the sea before them, so that they passed through it on dry ground, but you hurled their pursuers into the depths, like a stone into mighty waters. [12] By day you led them with a pillar of cloud, and by night with a pillar of fire to give them light on the way they were to take.

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Nehemiah 10

[10:1] Those who sealed it were:
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[6] Daniel, Ginnethon, Baruch,
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These were the priests.
[9] The Levites:

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Jeshua son of Azaniah, Binnui of the sons of Henadad, Kadmiel,

[10] and their associates: Shebaniah,

Hodiah, Kelita, Pelaiah, Hanan,

[11] Mica, Rehob, Hashabiah,

[12] Zaccur, Sherebiah, Shebaniah,

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[14] The leaders of the people:

Parosh, Pahath-Moab, Elam, Zattu, Bani,

[15] Bunni, Azgad, Bebai,

[16] Adonijah, Bigvai, Adin,

[17] Ater, Hezekiah, Azzur,

[18] Hodiah, Hashum, Bezai,

[19] Hariph, Anathoth, Nebai,

[20] Magpiash, Meshullam, Hezir,

[21] Meshezabel, Zadok, Jaddua,

[22] Pelatiah, Hanan, Anaiah,

[23] Hoshea, Hananiah, Hasshub,

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[28] “The rest of the people—priests, Levites, gatekeepers, singers, temple servants and all who separated themselves from the neighboring peoples for the sake of the Law of God, together with their wives and all their sons and daughters who are able to understand— [29] all these now join their brothers the nobles, and bind themselves with a curse and an oath to follow the Law of God given through Moses the servant of God and to obey carefully all the commands, regulations and decrees of the LORD our Lord.

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atonement for Israel; and for all the duties of the house of our God.

[34] “We—the priests, the Levites and the people—have cast lots to determine when each of our families is to bring to the house of our God at set times each year a contribution of wood to burn on the altar of the LORD our God, as it is written in the Law.

[35] “We also assume responsibility for bringing to the house of the LORD each year the firstfruits of our crops and of every fruit tree.

[36] “As it is also written in the Law, we will bring the firstborn of our sons and of our cattle, of our herds and of our flocks to the house of our God, to the priests ministering there.

[37] “Moreover, we will bring to the storerooms of the house of our God, to the priests, the first of our ground meal, of our [grain] offerings, of the fruit of all our trees and of our new wine and oil. And we will bring a tithe of our crops to the Levites, for it is the Levites who collect the tithes in all the towns where we work. [38] A priest descended from Aaron is to accompany the Levites when they receive the tithes, and the Levites are to bring a tenth of the tithes up to the house of our God, to the storerooms of the treasury. [39] The people of Israel, including the Levites, are to bring their contributions of grain, new wine and oil to the storerooms where the articles for the sanctuary are kept and where the ministering priests, the gatekeepers and the singers stay.

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