

## A Nation Under God - Nehemiah 9:1-5

What does it mean to be a nation under God? What would it look like?  
What would it take for us to fit that description?

**2 Chronicles 7:14** paints a good picture of the answer – ***“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 will forgive their sin and heal their land.”***

According to this verse, if we want to be a people/church/nation under God, if we want God to heal our land, there must exist these 5 realities:

- 1) God’s people must be present and God’s people must take action!
- 2) God’s people must humble themselves!
- 3) God’s people must pray!
- 4) God’s people must seek God’s face!
- 5) God’s people must turn from their wicked ways!

When I first asked, “What would it take for us, as a nation, to fit the description of a nation under God?”, how many answered in this way?

We too often point the finger at things outside of us, but God tells us in His Word that both the problem and the solution lies within us as His people!

This realization is what happened in Nehemiah 9 – The spiritual awakening of Ch. 8 gave birth to a nationwide response of confession before God!

At the hearing of God’s Word, the people of God realized how far they had fallen short of God’s commands/laws/ways & it prompted them to: Vs. 1-3

- 1) Come together & take action!
- 2) They fasted before the Lord – as a true act of humility!
- 3) They put on sackcloth & put ashes on their heads – a sign of mourning!
- 4) For a 1/4 of the day (4 hours) they read from the book of the Law, for another 1/4 of the day they made confession & worshipped the Lord – this was a true sign of the people seeking God’s face & putting Him first!
- 5) They separated themselves from those who were leading them astray & they confessed their sins, as well as the sins of their fathers.

To be a nation under God, there must first be a turning to God!  
- It starts with confession & it leads to worship!

When the people turned to God in Neh. 9 the Levites declared, ***“Stand up & bless the Lord your God from everlasting to everlasting.”*** Worship happened!

If you ever struggle on Sunday’s to worship God, ask yourself “What reason(s) do I have to worship Him?” What has God done? For me?

A prayer I always pray for us as a church is: “Lord, give us eyes to see Your truth, ears to hear it, a mind that comprehends it, a heart that is alive & receptive to it, & lives that are willing & ready to live in response!”

What follows in Nehemiah 9:6-37 is the prayer of God’s people in Nehemiah’s day, & it is the realization of the prayer I pray for us today!

- They began to trace God’s goodness all the way back to creation! - Vs. 6
- They proclaimed God’s covenantal faithfulness starting w/Abraham!-Vs.7-8
- They remembered God’s commitment & mercies in Egypt! - Vs. 9-12
- They declared God’s goodness & providence in the wilderness! - Vs. 13-15
- They saw the sins of their forefathers and they confessed it! - Vs. 16-18
- They praised God for His continual patience & forgiveness! - Vs. 19-21
- They proclaimed God’s goodness that led them into Canaan! - Vs. 22-25
- They acknowledged the ongoing cycle of sin-judgment-return-restoration that marked their whole history! - Vs. 26-28
- They declared that even in judgment God was gracious/merciful! -Vs.29-31
- They also prayed with confidence that God would to be merciful in their present distress just as He had been throughout their history! -Vs.32-35
- They also acknowledged the lasting & devastating effects of sin! - Vs. 36-37
- The prayer concludes with a time of covenant renewal! - Vs. 38

Do we pray this way? Do we confess our sin? Do we acknowledge God’s goodness? Do we respond with worship?

What would happen in our day/nation if we responded like God’s people did in Nehemiah’s day? Maybe God would respond & heal our land just as He did then! Will we take God at His Word when He proclaims 2 Chronicles 7:14?

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