
⁴Then Jeshua, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, *and* Chenani stood on the stairs of the Levites and cried out with a loud voice to the LORD their God. ⁵And the Levites, Jeshua, Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabniah, Sherebiah, Hodijah, Shebaniah, *and* Pethahiah, said: "Stand up *and* bless the LORD your God Forever and ever! " Blessed be Your glorious name, Which is exalted above all blessing and praise! ⁶You alone *are* the LORD; You have made heaven, The heaven of heavens, with all their host, The earth and everything on it, The seas and all that is in them, And You preserve them all. The host of heaven worships You.

1. The checkered history of Israel

- a. The Levites recite the entire history of Israel from the calling of Abram to the present distress
- b. By reciting the history of God's faithfulness while Israel was enslaved in Egypt, brought forth by God, protected in the wilderness, victorious over the kings of Canaan, nurtured during the judges & kings, sent into exile, and then brought back to the land, the Levites acknowledged God's grace, provision, mercy, and guidance, while also confessing Israel's sin & rebellion
- c. Beginning of confession, repentance, & renewing the covenant
- d. 2 groups stood on platform, one for leading confession & the other for praise (similar to blessing & cursing at Shechem when Joshua entered the land)
- e. Begins with creation when God made the heavens along with the hosts (angels)
 - a1. The angels were made first, as they were present to praise God's creation (Job 38: 1-8, described as *stars* as in Rev. 12)
 - a2. The actual stars were made on Day 4 of creation (Gen. 1:14-19)
- f. The recounting emphasizes Israel's continual rebellion & God's grace to forgive
 - a1. In wilderness they wanted to return to

Egypt when the way was difficult
a2. They continued to rebel & seek idols
a3. Time & time again they were punished by God until they cried out for mercy

2. The longsuffering God

- a. When Israel called out in anguish, God was merciful & sent a deliverer to them
- b. Only after repeated warnings & great punishment did God finally send invaders to exile Israel
- c. God sent a succession of kings to subdue Israel
 - a1. Assyria took away the northern kingdom
 - a2. Babylon took away Judah
 - a3. Yet to come was submission to the Greeks & Romans
- d. The tone of the confession is conciliatory
 - a1. This is not a litany of complaint or self-pity on how unfair God is (see Ezk. 18)
 - a2. Did not blame God or their conquerors
 - a3. They acknowledged their sins & the just punishment they received
 - a4. The stress of the confession was on the sins of the people & not the foreign powers

3. Recommitment

- a. The people recommit themselves to the covenant of God with ch. 10 listing the signatories
- b. The word *covenant* is not used here
 - a1. The people *cut a promise* that they would commit themselves to obey the Law of God
 - a2. The commitment had been made @ Sinai, at the beginning of the conquest, & at the end of Joshua's leadership
- c. The intentions of the people were genuine, though their follow through was flawed
- d. They cried out for mercy since they were still a subjugated people in their own land
 - a1. They looked forward to the day when they would be masters of their own land again
 - a2. The 1st step to restoration was humility
- e. This is a good beginning, but hard to maintain