

king's chapel

Community Group Discussion Guide

Week of May 3, 2015

This Week's Focus: Prayer: The Levites' prayer is a look back on God's goodness and mercy in spite of their rebellion.

This Week's Text: Nehemiah 9:9-37

*Israel delighted themselves in God's great goodness but they did not delight themselves in the Lord. Like the prodigal son they wanted the Father's wealth but not the Father's will. **Warren Wiersbe***

*And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ by grace you have been saved. **Ephesians 2:1-5***

Related Texts: 1 Timothy 4:7; Philippians 2:12-13; Proverbs 3:11; Romans 5:20

Observations and Questions for Discussion:

- What was most illuminating about this week's text/sermon?
- What is the context of Nehemiah 9 as it relates to the preceding chapters?
- What are the major themes of this passage? In other words, what phrases, concepts, and truths are repeated throughout this chapter?
- Nehemiah 9 is considered the longest prayer in the Bible. What makes it a prayer rather than merely a retelling of Israel's history? Why is this significant?
- What can we learn about the nature of God in this passage? What can we learn about the nature of humankind?

- Israel's rebellion is mentioned numerous times in this passage but so are God's grace, mercy, and steadfast love for Israel. Can you relate to Israel's cycle of sin and repentance?
- Verse 18 explicitly mentions Israel's idolatry. What is idolatry? Do you recognize idolatry in your life? Read Romans 5:6-11 and 20-21. Discuss and celebrate the magnitude of God's love.
- Verses 20 and 30 explicitly mention the active presence of the Holy Spirit. Does it surprise you to find the Holy Spirit mentioned in the Old Testament?
 - Why is it important to know and believe that the Holy Spirit was actively present in the world and in the lives of God's people prior to Pentacost?
- Name at least two promises of God's covenant with Abraham that are mentioned in this passage. Reference verses 22-25.
- "Sometimes having too much is a curse." Do you agree with that statement? Reference Nehemiah 9:25-26 and Proverbs 30:8-9. Have you, like Israel, delighted in the gifts over the Giver?
- This chapter shows that God often disciplined Israel, but always with the intention of reconciling his covenant people to himself. Discuss the purpose for and importance of godly discipline in the life of the Christian. Reference Proverbs 3:11 and Hebrews 12:6-11.
 - What is the difference between punishment and discipline?
- In verse 33, the people admit that God has "been righteous in all that has come upon us, for you have dealt faithfully and we have acted wickedly." How does God remain righteous in granting grace to sinful humans? Reference Isaiah 53:4-6 and Romans 3:20-26.
- How does Nehemiah 9 point to Jesus? How does it compel you to live on mission for King Jesus?

Next Week's Text: Nehemiah 10