

Supplementary Materials for KOOL Journal for Parents/Adults

Week 15: 30 April to 6 May, 2018 (pp. 122 – 129)

30 April to 6 May, 2018: Nehemiah Chapter 9:16-37.

Review Verse of the Week **Nehemiah 9:17b**

But you are a forgiving God, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love.

Date/Read/Watch	Reflection and Response (R & R)
<p>Mon. 30 Apr</p> <p>Neh. 9:16–21 {Neh. 9:16-17}</p>	<p>Having hitherto recounted God’s mercies toward them (9:5-15), with a view to aggravate the people’s guilt, the Levites then came to confess their sins, in order to lead them to a sincere grief, not only on account of the sufferings they had brought on themselves, but for the injury and indignity which they had offered to God (replacing Him with a golden calf, directly against His command not to make any graven images). But seeing how God continued to be with His people shows that His patience is amazing! In spite of their repeated failings, pride and stubbornness, He was already to forgive (9:17; Psalm 130:4), and His Spirit was ever ready to instruct (9:20), first to Moses and then the seventy elders (Num. 11:16-17).</p> <p>R & R:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in love (9:17). How often do we take this for granted and kept sinning? • How can we apply what we learn about the extent of God’s forgiveness in this passage and from Matt. 18:21-22 (to forgive those who fail us “seventy times seven”)? If there is someone in our life we find hard to forgive, what should we do about it?
<p>Tue. 1 May</p> <p>Neh.9:22–25 {Neh. 9:24-25}</p>	<p>Israel became an instrument of God’s judgement as the land of the Canaan once occupied by a variety of princes and people (seven nations: Deut.7:1) were given over to the former, together with the bounty of the land in order for Israel to be a holy people (Deut. 7:6). Today, as the body of Christ, the church, we are not called to bring judgement on the world but to be salt and light in a way Israel could not (Isa. 42:6, 49:6).</p> <p>R & R:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we be salt of the earth and light of the world (Matt. 5:15-16)? <p>Notes:</p> <p>9: 22 – The victory over these kings at the battles of Jahaz and Edrei (Num. 21:21-35) made the Israelites masters of the E. bank of the Jordan. The conquest of these two kingdoms is named first, because it preceded the possession of Canaan. Reference to the conquest of these two kings is frequent, e.g. Num. 32:33; Deut.1:4, 3:1; Joshua 2:10; Psalm 135:11, 136:19-20.</p>

<p>Wed. 2 May</p> <p>Neh.9:26–28 {Neh. 9:26-28}</p>	<p>The good things the Israelites enjoyed in the land which God had given them, made them wanton, indulging themselves in luxury and intemperance, instead of delighting themselves in God’s great goodness and using it to His honour and glory. They not only rejected God’s law, they even killed the prophets sent by God to admonish them. The ‘law’ of God, which Israel rejected, is not the ceremonial or even the written law, but the moral and spiritual ‘teaching’ of Jehovah. As a consequence, they were delivered into the hands of their enemies (the kings of Mesopotamia, Moab, Canaan, etc.) but once again when they repented, God in His manifold mercy, sent them deliverers to rescue them.</p> <p>R & R:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we use the bounty God has blessed us with? • In what ways have we disregarded God’s Law to our own detriment? <p>Notes:</p> <p>9:26 – Compare 1 Kings 18:4; 1 Kings 19:10; 2 Chron. 24:21. Jewish tradition affirms that more than one of the great prophets (e.g. Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel) were martyred by their countrymen.</p> <p>9:27 – The writer seems to have the history of "Judges" especially in his mind e.g. Othniel and Ehud (who are called "deliverers," Judges 3:9, 15), Shamgar, Gideon, Jephthah, Samson, Saul, David, etc.</p>
<p>Thu. 3 May</p> <p>Neh. 9:29 –31 {Neh. 9:30-31}</p>	<p>The guilt of the Israelites was enormously increased by the fact that they would not give ear to the exhortations constantly addressed to them by the messengers/prophets of God. Therefore they were delivered into the hands of the heathen, or people of the lands. But God in His mercy, delivered them over and over again when they repented. God delayed to bring upon them those judgments which they had deserved, and waited for their repentance. When the judgement came, God left a remnant of the poorer people in the land, and showed favour to the captives in Babylon many of whom now had returned to their own land. God puts no limit to the number of times we can come to Him to obtain mercy but we must come in order to obtain it, recognizing our need and asking him for help.</p> <p>R & R:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there a recurring difficulty or an addiction that we need God to deliver us from? Be willing and ready to make changes in your attitude and behavior that will correct that situation. • We are often tempted to rely on wealth for security rather than God who makes it possible. Do our blessings make us thankful to God and draw us closer to Him or do they make us feel self-sufficient and forgetful of God? <p>Notes:</p> <p>9:30 – God’s forbearance lasted 260 years for the ten tribes from the revolt of Jeroboam, and 135 years longer for the remaining two tribes.</p>

<p>Fri. 4 May</p> <p>Neh.9:32– 37 {Neh. 9: 36–37}</p>	<p>The Israelites had to appeal to God’s covenant of love (mercy). They were in the strange position of being slaves in their own land, having to turn over a part of their resources each year to a foreign king. They (their bodies) were liable to be pressed, to serve in the king’s wars or in his works while their cattle were liable to be employed for the king’s business. This is ironic, since God had given the land to them to enjoy its bounty and hence it served as a bitter reminder of the lasting consequences of sin. Their great distress (9:37) was not so much under the Persian yoke as in the remembrance of God’s judgments.</p> <p>R & R:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Like the Israelites (9:25, 35), we are often tempted to rely on wealth for security rather than God who makes it possible. Do our blessings make us thankful to God and draw us closer to Him or do they make us feel self-sufficient and forgetful of God? <p>Notes: 9:32 – The Kings of Assyria were “the rod of God’s anger” (Isa.10:5) who were the first to make Israel tributary and the first to carry Israel away into captivity (2 Kings 15:19; 17:23). Pul, Tiglath-pileser, Shalmaneser, Sargon, Sennacherib, Esar-haddon, are traced in the sacred record as successive scourges.</p>
<p>Sat./Sun. 5-6 May</p>	<p>Enjoy this short video in relation to 9:27 and 9:34 about how the leaders rejected God’s law: Read Scripture: Judges, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kOYy8iCfJ4&t=36s, The Bible Project, Published on Mar 9, 2016 (7:29)</p> <p>The Book of Judges (which was alluded to in the Levites’ historical narrative in 9:27) reminds us of what happens when we do things our way, instead of God’s way. Judges 17:6 explains: "In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes."</p> <p>R & R:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent are we like these Israelites of old testing God’s goodness in recurrent cycles of rebellion, repentance, and restoration? • How can we break this vicious cycle?

References

G A Getz, **Life Essentials Study Bible: Biblical Principles to Live By**, Holman Bible Publishers, 2011.

<https://bibleprinciples.org/pf-search-book/> (search videos by book and click on Nehemiah)

Tyndale House Publishers, **Chronological Life Application Study Bible**, 2004.

<http://biblehub.com/commentaries/nehemiah/9-37.htm>