

Character Studies from Daniel and Nehemiah

This week – The deep and real experience of a believer’s joy when the Lord’s work is blessed.

“Thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness.”
Nehemiah 9 v17.

Bible Readings for this week:

(Choose a regular time each day to read the Bible and pray whether it be when you first wake up or just before you go to sleep)

Day	Bible Reading	Tick When Read
Sunday	Nehemiah 8v1-18 (Gladness as God’s Word is read)	
Monday	Nehemiah 9v1-21 (God’s goodness is remembered)	
Tuesday	Nehemiah 9v22-38 (God’s goodness is remembered)	
Wednesday	Psalms 30 (Praise the Lord for His mercy)	
Thursday	Nehemiah 10v28-39, 11 v1-2 (Promise to do good)	
Friday	Nehemiah 12v27-43 (Rejoicing at the wall’s dedication)	
Saturday	Titus 2 (Redeemed to be God’s special people)	

Important Thought for us Today: Do you believe you’re a Christian? One beautiful proof that we are truly the Lord’s is that we will experience great joy in response to the Lord’s continuing kindness to us. The people wept when they saw the evil of their sin, but their mourning turned to joy and thankfulness when they knew that the Lord had forgiven them. (Psalm 30v5). Rehearsing God’s blessings of the past - such as their release from the Egyptian slavery, guidance and protection by the pillar of fire and cloud, and provision of food and clothing in the desert, (despite their murmuring and complaints), caused them to dedicate their lives to the Lord; obeying His word and serving Him.

For us to be Christians we too must have great personal sorrow for the sins we have committed and omitted to do, and on experiencing His forgiveness, be full of joy in the Lord’s good hand and His dealings with us. We will want to praise and sing, we will want to read His word and pray unceasingly, we will want to join with fellow believers in a sound church, worshipping Him, and keep His Day holy for Him. Have you experienced this joy, and do you give spontaneous praise and worship to your Saviour and God?

Hymn 558 - Praising the kindness of the Lord as we experience His blessings towards us.

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| 1. How blest is life if lived for Thee,
My loving Saviour and my Lord:
No pleasures that the world can give
Such perfect gladness can afford. | 3. All day to walk beneath Thy smile,
Watching Thine eye to guide me still,
To rest at night beneath Thy care,
Guarded by Thee from every ill. |
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EDT Bible/College Class Take Home Sheet

This sheet is given to remind you of the lesson and to encourage you to read your Bible.

God’s Kindness - The Wall of Jerusalem Completed.

- **God’s great kindness to the People of Jerusalem.**

Jerusalem would have remained in ruins if God had not:

- Put into Nehemiah’s heart a strong desire to obey, and show great courage, self-determination, and self-sacrifice, to restore Jerusalem to its former glory.
- Put into the People’s heart a mind to work together, despite not being professional builders; the long hours of hard work; and the opposition they met.
- Silenced the enemy - forcing them to finally admit that God alone is almighty.

- **God’s kindness brought the right response from the people.**

Seeing that the repairs to the walls were completed in record time, and hearing the Word of God read at the Water Gate, made the people respond with:

- Recognition of God’s holiness when the Law was read. (Nehemiah 8v2,3).
- Heartfelt sorrow causing tearful repentance for their sin. (Nehemiah 8v9).
- Great joy and gladness in the Lord’s faithfulness and truth. (Nehemiah 8v12-18).
- Praise for God’s past goodness to them despite their wilful sin. (Nehemiah 9).
- Promises to be obedient - keeping the Sabbath Day holy, worshipping sincerely, tithing (offerings), and living with purity and sincerity of heart. (Nehemiah 10).

- **Does God’s great kindness bring the right response in us?**

When we have sorrow for sin, will we too respond with joy, giving our lives to God?

- **Nehemiah’s kindness reflects God’s wonderful kindness to us.**

Nehemiah’s selfless devotion is a picture of Christ’s lovingkindness in redeeming us:

- Nehemiah willingly gave up the highest comfort, honour and authority of the court of Susa to rescue a ruined, disgraced city; just as Christ willingly gave up the glory of Heaven and came to this world of sin to rescue and restore a People for Himself.
- Nehemiah toiled against much opposition and the threats of many enemies; Christ toiled against the Devil’s determined opposition. He willingly allowed Himself to be crucified on the cross, where He bore the punishment of our sin for us.
- Nehemiah worked at his own expense. He was entitled to charge the people for what he did but chose to work unpaid and gave liberally to all. (Nehemiah 5v14-19); Christ paid for our sins Himself. He freely took the pain and suffering due to sinners.
- Nehemiah triumphed over his enemies and rejoiced in seeing the wall restored; Christ triumphed over sin, the devil and death. His life, death and resurrection were a complete success. Repentant sinners are redeemed by Him - now, and for eternity!

Will we rejoice at the Lord’s great kindness to us in dying for us on the cross, and obediently give Him all the praise, in the same way that Nehemiah and the people did?

The Levites said, ‘Stand up and bless the LORD your God for ever and ever: and blessed be Thy glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise. Thou, even Thou, art LORD alone.’

Nehemiah 9 v5

The people’s response: *All that day they offered great sacrifices and rejoiced: for God had made them rejoice with great joy.*

Nehemiah 12 v 43