

RESTORED

Lesson 15 – The Cost of Disobedience

Nehemiah 9:18-38

History can be one of the most powerful teachers, if we take a long look and learn from it. Unfortunately, human nature shows that we are prone to ignore history and repeat the mistakes of past generations. That's exactly what happened to the nation of Israel. The people would worship and honor God for a time and then grow careless and wander from Him. In Nehemiah 9, the people experienced the unfortunate cost of their disobedience. Because of this, they cried out to God and asked for His grace and forgiveness once more. What did God do? He did exactly what He always does for any of His children who repent. He forgave them and gave them a fresh start. What a beautiful picture of God's unfailing love! What an awesome reminder that God will do the same for us today if we cry out to Him.

Open your Bible and begin with a word of prayer

This Week's Scripture: Nehemiah 9:18-38

¹⁸ "Even when they made a molded calf for themselves, And said, 'This is your god That brought you up out of Egypt,' And worked great provocations, ¹⁹ Yet in Your manifold mercies You did not forsake them in the wilderness. The pillar of the cloud did not depart from them by day, To lead them on the road; Nor the pillar of fire by night, To show them light, And the way they should go. ²⁰ You also gave Your good Spirit to instruct them, And did not withhold Your manna from their mouth, And gave them water for their thirst. ²¹ Forty years You sustained them in the wilderness; They lacked nothing; Their clothes did not wear out And their feet did not swell. ²² "Moreover You gave them kingdoms and nations, And divided them into districts. So they took possession of the land of Sihon, The land of the king of Heshbon, And the land of Og king of Bashan. ²³ You also multiplied their children as the stars of heaven, And brought them into the land Which You had told their fathers To go in and possess. ²⁴ So the people went in And possessed the land; You subdued before them the inhabitants of the land, The Canaanites, And gave them into their hands, With their kings And the people of the land, That they might do with them as they wished. ²⁵ And they took strong cities and a rich land, And possessed houses full of all goods, Cisterns already dug, vineyards, olive groves, And fruit trees in abundance. So they ate and were filled and grew fat, And delighted themselves in Your great goodness. ²⁶ "Nevertheless they were disobedient And rebelled against You, Cast Your law behind their backs And killed Your prophets, who testified against them To turn them to Yourself; And they worked great provocations. ²⁷ Therefore You delivered them into the hand of their enemies, Who oppressed them; And in the time of their trouble, When they cried to You, You heard from heaven; And according to

Your abundant mercies You gave them deliverers who saved them From the hand of their enemies. ²⁸ "But after they had rest, They again did evil before You. Therefore You left them in the hand of their enemies, So that they had dominion over them; Yet when they returned and cried out to You, You heard from heaven; And many times You delivered them according to Your mercies, ²⁹ And testified against them, That You might bring them back to Your law. Yet they acted proudly, And did not heed Your commandments, But sinned against Your judgments, 'Which if a man does, he shall live by them.' And they shrugged their shoulders, Stiffened their necks, And would not hear. ³⁰ Yet for many years You had patience with them, And testified against them by Your Spirit in Your prophets. Yet they would not listen; Therefore You gave them into the hand of the peoples of the lands. ³¹ Nevertheless in Your great mercy You did not utterly consume them nor forsake them; For You are God, gracious and merciful. ³² "Now therefore, our God, The great, the mighty, and awesome God, Who keeps covenant and mercy: Do not let all the trouble seem small before You That has come upon us, Our kings and our princes, Our priests and our prophets, Our fathers and on all Your people, From the days of the kings of Assyria until this day. ³³ However You are just in all that has befallen us; For You have dealt faithfully, But we have done wickedly. ³⁴ Neither our kings nor our princes, Our priests nor our fathers, Have kept Your law, Nor heeded Your commandments and Your testimonies, With which You testified against them. ³⁵ For they have not served You in their kingdom, Or in the many good things that You gave them, Or in the large and rich land which You set before them; Nor did they turn from their wicked works. ³⁶ "Here we are, servants today! And the land that You gave to our fathers, To eat its fruit and its bounty, Here we are, servants in it! ³⁷ And it yields much increase to the kings You have set over us, Because of our sins; Also they have dominion over our bodies and our cattle At their pleasure; And we are in great distress. ³⁸ "And because of all this, We make a sure covenant and write it; Our leaders, our Levites, and our priests seal it."

This Week's Memory Verse:

Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; but exhort one another daily, while it is called "Today," lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

Hebrews 3:12-13(NKJV)

1. In Nehemiah 8, the people of God were celebrating. In chapter 9, we find them repenting because of their disobedience and refocusing on the blessings and greatness of their God. From 1 John 1:9, what happens when we willingly confess our sins? _____

2. This chapter contains the longest prayer in the Bible. It is a prayer of reflection where the Jews acknowledge all that God had done for them in the past. Read Romans 15:4 and share any insight on how this prayer can help us today. _____

3. Even though Israel disobeyed and departed from the living God, He did not forsake His people. God continued to pour out His manifold mercies on them. From Nehemiah 9:19-23, list God's merciful blessings towards His people. _____

4. Despite the Israelites' repeated sins, hardness of heart and failures, they still came back to the Lord. From the verses below, what confidence can we gain to approach the Lord when we have failed or fallen short?

a. Hebrews 4:14-16: _____

b. Romans 5:6-8: _____

c. Romans 8:1: _____

Reflect and Respond – In spite of all their blessings from God, the children of Israel remained stiff-necked and disobedient. One of the dangers that living in comfort and success poses for Christians is that they can begin to take their blessings for granted. What are some ways we can safeguard ourselves to avoid the trap of forgetting the Lord or turning away from Him in our times of prosperity? _____

Result – Consider today's Bible study lecture and group time. What one lesson will you take away from this study and apply to your walk with the Lord? _____
