

Celebrating a Job Well Done  
Nehemiah 12:27-43

Review

1. When celebrating the completion of Jerusalem's city walls, the people chose not to congratulate themselves or their leaders, but to give glory to God
2. Instead of being proud of their accomplishments, they purified themselves, indicating their sinfulness and their need for repentance.
3. The people offered animal sacrifices, reminding one another of their need for a Savior
4. Giving thanks to God was so important to the people that the choirs leading the worship were called "thanksgivings"
5. Because everyone – men, women and children – had been convicted of their sin back in chapter 8, everyone rejoiced because of God's forgiveness and blessing

Go further – Read Psalm 130

1. Psalms 120 through 134 are called "Songs of Ascents," songs the people sang as they went up Mount Zion to worship in the Temple in Jerusalem. What attitude does verse 3 indicate, and why is such an attitude necessary in preparation for worship?
2. How might the confession in verse 3 explain the kind of trouble the Psalmist is in in verses 1 and 2? How has sin caused problems in your life in the past?
3. In verse 4, the Psalmist connects God's forgiveness not with our ability to love God, but with our ability to fear Him. How might God's forgiveness enable us to fear Him, and why would this be a good thing?
4. In verses 5 and 6, the psalmist says he waits for God. Given verses 1-4, what do you think he is waiting for God to do?
5. In verse 5, on what does the psalmist trust while he waits? What parts of God's word give you strength when you your sins have gotten you into trouble?
6. What reasons do verses 7 and 8 give us to trust in God? How might meditating on these truths better prepare us for worship?

Read Psalm 125

7. What do verses 1 and 2 say that God does for His people, and to what visual scene do verses 1 and 2 compare this?
8. From what sort of wickedness does verse 3 say God will protect the people? How does this verse say the people should respond to this kind of deliverance?
9. What does verse 4 ask God to do? What does this reinforce our need for purification in worship?
10. What does verse 5 tell us about God? Why is this important to remember in worship?

Read Psalm 126

11. How do verses 1-3 echo the experience of the people of Nehemiah's time? When have you experienced this sort of deliverance in your own life? How has this built your faith?
12. How does verse 4 remind us that no deliverance in this life is complete?
13. What precious promise do we find in verses 5 and 6? How have seasons in your own life been followed by seasons of joy? How have these seasons increased your faith in God?

Apply:

1. How might we incorporate repentance and thanksgiving into our own preparation for worship?
2. As you prepare for worship, what truths about God are especially meaningful for you and why?
3. How might the experience of Nehemiah's people and these Songs of Ascent change the way you prepare for worship?