

THERE WILL BE A TIME TO CELEBRATE

TEXT: ***Nehemiah 8:10: Then he said unto them: Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto the Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the Lord is your strength.***

INTRODUCTION

Nehemiah had the confidence of all the people of God because he had their best interest at heart from the very beginning of his ministry. He was very patriotic toward his nation and sacrificed much to see it rise out of the dust of ruins. He is one of the best administrators on record in history. With divine wisdom, he was enabled to bring a prosperous economy out of the debris and wasted resources. In this text, this man of God is exhorting the people to celebrate both the Lord's victory for them over their enemies, and over the great revival that has broken out among them in their turning to the Lord.

There are times when Christians should give special place to praising the Lord and celebrating His victory at Calvary, along with the Day of Pentecost. We should keep in remembrance God's love gifts to His Church —

- **the Atonement by which He pardoned our sins**
- **the Gift of Salvation**
- **the Gift of the infilling of the Holy Ghost.**

The first instruction to the people of God was:



Nehemiah 8:10a: Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet,

What does this mean?

Then next part:

Nehemiah 8:10b: . . . and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord:

It is telling us to enjoy the blessings of the Lord yourself, and also share them with others.

We have a gracious Lord Who freely gives us all things to enjoy. But, we can't hog it up to ourselves. To share with others is part of our Christian responsibility and obligation. Peter felt this way when he said:

Acts 3:6-8:

6 Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.

7 And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.

8 And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God.



The spirit of giving is as important as the gifts we receive. Some folks give to be seen, to be flattered, and to be made over with much to do. It takes away the blessings the giver will get from the when he seeks it from mankind. The way we treat God's blessings is the true test of our salvation. We should take nothing for granted but ever be grateful, for the Lord freely giveth us all things to enjoy.

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Romans 8:32: He that spared not His Own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?

Gratitude from our hearts will enlarge us spiritually. The joy of the Lord will flood the hearts of those who are freehearted and will share with the underprivileged.

The benefits of Calvary and the Day of Pentecost are tremendous. It is the Will of God for us to be the recipients of all these benefits. God's Will is for our success and not failure in the Christian life. Sin breeds failure, while righteousness brings joy and peace. Nehemiah told the people to celebrate because The Word of God had taken hold of their hearts and they had been cleansed.

Sin breeds failure, while righteousness brings joy and peace.

John 15:3: Now ye are clean through the Word which I have spoken unto you.

It is time to praise God when we are right with Him and to celebrate the benefits of Calvary.

Even the disciples who suffered failure while fishing all night were met by Jesus on the shore and changed defeat into victory. Under His instructions, they let

down their nets and enclosed a great multitude of fish so their nets could not hold them — 153 fish in all, and they were whoppers. When they made an effort to obey His Word, the Lord rewarded their labor and faith. So likewise it was with the efforts of the people in Nehemiah's day. God rewarded them for their efforts.

Working together is important. If God would reward us without our making any effort, it would only lower us to the level of parasites. When we work for the upbuilding of His Kingdom, then all Heaven rejoices, and we receive some of the splash over.

God wants us to rejoice

God wants us to rejoice. You can be a sourpuss if you want to, or a sad sack, but we won't join you. The Lord is the Giver of JOY which is why it is called here the joy of the Lord. When it comes, we are strengthened.

Nehemiah 8:10: Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the LORD is your strength.

When we lack this God-provided joy, we are as weak as a wet noodle. Heaven is a happy place, and there is going to be a lot of joy there. I want to be in the rehearsal down here so I won't feel out of place up there.

Come to think of it, with the price of gold soaring as it is, Heaven is going to be a most desirable place. The Lord is sparing nothing to make it so, but it will be prepared for the worthies, for the faithful, and for the overcomers.

When Nehemiah told the people to go home and eat the fat, drink the sweet, I can just imagine how this fell on some deaf ears there that day. They had been weeping and mourning when they heard the Word of God which had pricked their consciences. Thank God for those who can still weep over sin and become repentant. God's Word says:

2 Corinthians 7:10: For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.

This sorrow made Paul rejoice, as we observe in verse nine, for he knew this must come before the cleansing and the restoration of the blessing of the Lord's Presence. A clean heart brings forth cheerfulness of disposition. The joy of the Lord is your strength. Jesus said:

A clean heart brings forth cheerfulness of disposition.

John 15:11: These things have I spoken unto you, that My Joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.

An ungrateful heart is an insult to the Lord. Have you ever heard anybody say: *“This isn’t good enough for me. I deserve much more than this.”* Such a person would have said to Nehemiah when he told them to eat the fat and drink the sweet, *“That sounds like some more pie in the sky from you preachers. I don’t believe it’s all that good. I am very suspicious about all this fat and sweet which you always are talking about. I think it’s a come-on and a trick or trap. They are just imagining all this stuff.”* Well, go ahead, sourpuss, grumble and grouch all you please. I know by experience that:

An ungrateful heart is an insult to the Lord.

Proverbs 10:22: The blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and He addeth no sorrow with it.

I know why some folks fuss at the Word of God. It’s not this first part that they mind so much, but that middle part of the verse which says: SEND PORTIONS UNTO THEM FOR WHOM NOTHING IS PREPARED, for this is a HOLY DAY UNTO THE LORD. God has blessed us to bless others. That is the very nature of God. Jesus said:

Luke 6:38: Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

If God did not delight to give, we would have no Saviour, no world, no rain, no sunshine, no food, and no cause to rejoice.

Proverbs 11:24-25:

24 There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.

25 The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.

Selfishness degrades people and makes them greedy and miserly

SELFISHNESS degrades people and makes them greedy and miserly. There is nothing so pitiful as to look on a tightfisted, sour face, dehydrated because of the lack of an overflowing heart. God’s Word says that to withhold more than is meet will be an invitation for poverty to come to that person. That is why God wants us to:

Nehemiah 8:10b: . . . send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the Lord is your strength.

He wants them to rejoice, and He wants you to rejoice, too. God wants to show

His care for the unfortunate through you. If we are partakers of the divine nature, we are saved people and are supposed to behave accordingly.

2 Peter 1:4: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

Then we will feel like God feels towards the needy, and will act accordingly.

Matthew 5:16: Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father Who is in Heaven.

It will be hard to stand face-to-face with the Lord and hear Him say:

Matthew 25:41: Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

It will be mighty hard to face God and to hear Him say those words to us which are recorded in:

James 2:14-16:

14 What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?

15 If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food,

16 And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?

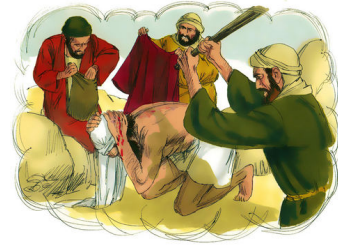
1 John 3:17: But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

There will never be another opportunity after death to share with those who are starving, naked, hungry, groping in the world's night, without a ray of hope of light, and facing a future that is as dark as an endless night.

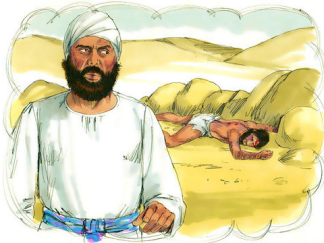
Let us turn again towards them for whom nothing is prepared, and send them a portion as God commanded us. There are many like the man to whom the good Samaritan came in Jesus' parable. The man had fallen among thieves and was left half dead, but a good-hearted Samaritan had compassion on him and helped him. We used to sing the song: "*rescue the perishing and care for the dying, Jesus is merciful, Jesus will save*".

Luke 10:30-37:

30 And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.



31 And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

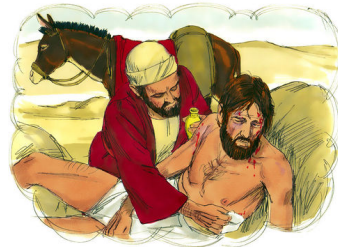


32 And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.

33 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him,

34 And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

35 And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.



36 Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?

37 And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

There would never have been a CALVARY, had it not been FOR:

John 3:16: For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have Everlasting Life.

Sinner, you can feel good again when you get rid of your guilty conscience. You too, can have joy and gladness, for this is what the salvation of the Lord brings to the repentant heart that comes to Jesus for mercy and forgiveness. Trust only in His shed Blood for your pardon, and you can EAT THE FAT (the Bread of Life) and drink the sweet (the Water of Life), and be on your way to Heaven rejoicing with us. God wants you to enjoy all these benefits of Calvary, and they are yours for the asking and receiving. Do not wait till death for a second chance to make it into Heaven. If you neglect this great salvation, now, you will never have

another opportunity to enjoy it in the future world. With Jesus, you can celebrate forever.

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