

3rd week of September
Read the Word and Confess Your Sins

- **Text:** Nehemiah 9:1~3 (September 16)
- **Point:** Those who love God long for a place of worship where they can listen to God's word, pray, and praise Him.

≡ **1. Praise**

(Hymn 325) 예수가 함께 계시니

≡ **2. Prayer**

Thank you, God, for bringing our family together in a place of grace. Please let us long for Your word and look forward to it, and let us worship You with sincere hearts.

≡ **3. The Word**

Read Nehemiah 9:1~3 together (read the verse 3 times).

* Reading the Word over and over again in different translations will help you to deepen your understanding of the material.

<ESV>

1 Now on the twenty-fourth day of this month the people of Israel were assembled with fasting and in sackcloth, and with earth on their heads. 2 And the Israelites separated themselves from all foreigners and stood and confessed their sins and the iniquities of their fathers. 3 And they stood up in their place and read from the Book of the Law of the Lord their God for a quarter of the day; for another quarter of it they made confession and worshiped the Lord their God.

<NASB>

1 Now on the twenty-fourth day of this month the sons of Israel assembled with fasting, in sackcloth and with dirt upon them. ²The descendants of Israel separated themselves from all foreigners, and they stood and confessed their sins and the wrongdoings of their fathers. ³While they stood in their place, they read from the Book of the Law of the Lord their God for a fourth of the day; and for *another* fourth they confessed and worshiped the Lord their God.

Understanding Text

Through the teachings of Ezra the Bachelor and the Levites, the people of Judah understood God's word. After keeping the Feast of Tabernacles according to the law, the people gathered together and fasted and repented. They resolutely forsook what God didn't like. I also listened to God's words for three hours during the day, and then confessed my sins and worshipped God for three hours.

Understanding the text for Leaders

Nehemiah built the walls of Jerusalem to create an environment in which the temple could function fully. Then I began to teach them what it means to live as God's people and how to worship. Through Ezra, he taught all the people about the law. Ezra, a bachelor and priest, was the one who led the second return from exile, and he was ready to diligently study, keep, and teach the law during his captivity (Ezra 7:6, 10). He taught the people the law in detail and enlightened them about their identity so that they could live as God's people. Because of his teachings, people were able to achieve an inner restoration as God's people. Thanks to the zealous teachings of Ezra and the other Levites, and the people's longing for God's word, the community of Judah began to be restored to a common body of faith. Not long after they kept the Feast of Tabernacles according to the law (see Nehemiah 8:13~18), they gathered before God again. They listened to the word as soon as the sun rose, and they repented thoroughly when they looked back on how they had not lived according to the word. They did not just repent with words, but tried to keep their faith by breaking away from the Gentiles (customs and idols) who were shaking their religious identity. Those who have thoroughly converted themselves before the Word can stand as upright worshippers.

4. Sharing

1) How did the people of Judah come before God, and what did they do to worship Him? (Verses 1~3)

Upper Grades

What did the people who gathered with a heart of love for God do? (Verses 1~3)

Lower Grades

What did the people of Judah do when they gathered out of love for God? (verse 3).

Question Guide

Through the teachings of Ezra and the Levites, the people of Judah understood God's word and were convicted of their sins. Let's take a look at what it was like for the people who gathered to truly repent before God and what they did to draw closer to God.

Commentary for Leaders

The people, who kept the Feast of Tabernacles (July 15~22 of the Jewish calendar) for a week as written in the Law, gathered again on the 24th of the month to hear more of God's word. They began to understand what it means to live as God's people, and they began to thoroughly repent and forsake their shame before God. He also showed me that he was trying to live according to the Word of God, concentrating on the Word all day long so that he could listen to the Word more closely.

2) Share what you need to repent of before God and what you need to decide to do for your Word and prayer life.

Upper Grades

Make an appointment with God in advance so that you can have some time with Him. And start doing it today.

Lower Grades

When do I pray to God and repent during the day? Set a time to meet with God.

□ Question Guide

Words and prayers are the way to meet God. The Word is like food for the soul and the compass of life. Prayer is the breath of the soul and a time of conversation with God. If you listen to God's words every day and talk to God every day, you will grow into an intimate relationship with God. God is looking for worshippers who make the Word and prayer a priority in their lives.

□ Commentary for Leaders

Look at what the people of Judah did and how much time they spent to meet God. They acknowledged that they were sinners and humbly fasted and repented. I listened to God's word for three hours and prayed for repentance for three hours. It's not easy for us to do that every day. Nevertheless, it is very important to set aside time in the day to listen to God's word and repent. It's because it's time to be with God. Set a time for each of you to meet God through His Word and prayer. And do it. Focusing on God's word, examining ourselves in order to live according to God's word, and worshipping God without doing things that God hates are expressions of our love for God.

≡ 5. Be grateful

Thank God for His Word and for the opportunity to repent.

≡ 6. Prayer

God, we want to know You more closely. Help me to give up words and deeds that You dislikes, repent wholeheartedly, and listen to Your Word. Please guide us to live like a child of God through daily QT and daily prayer.

- End the family worship service with the "Prayer the Lord Taught You."
