

## **Nehemiah 9:24-30 – Praise God, He Pulled You out of Your Pits 2**

TSK, HebrewLexicon, Armstrong, Gaebelain, Handfuls, Gill, Trapp, Henry, Delitzsch, Barnes, Geneva, Clarke, Poole, JFB, Expositor, INT  
Beloved in the Lord: This chapter of Nehemiah focused on **praising God for his goodness to the Jews!** He rescued them from **the pit of rebellion** and **the pit of idolatry** into which they fell and **after rescuing them from their pits he established them to their rightful place as his bride and took care of them for the whole 40 years as they traveled from Egypt to Canaan.** **God continued to establish them in Canaan.** But unfortunately, **they fell into 2 more pits** from which God had to rescue them. Hear about this today.

Our headings are:

**God's People Established in Canaan Permanently**

**God's People Pulled out of the Pit of Provocations**

**God's People Pulled out of the Pit of Pride**

Our goals are: **That as the redeemed of Christ, you will be thankful when God pulls you out of your pits into which you fall.**

### **God's people Established in Canaan Permanently**

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.

#### **1. God gave Israel's enemies, the Canaanites, into their hands after Israel came out of Egypt.**

"Subdue" meant the Jews humbled the Canaanites. **This showed the impotency of the Canaanite gods.**

#### **2. God's people had to go in and fight and take possession of the land, but it was God who gave them the victory.**

You can see this was God's work because **God instructed them to do as they wished to the people of Canaan.**

**Genesis 9:25** Then he said: "**Cursed be Canaan;** A servant of servants He shall be to his brethren."

#### **3. God then gave his people much more to establish them!**

##### **a. Protected cities.**

**Deuteronomy 1:28** 'Where can we go up? Our brethren have discouraged our hearts, saying, "The people are greater and taller than we; **the cities are great and fortified up to heaven...**

##### **b. Rich farm land.**

**Deuteronomy 8:7** "For the LORD your God is bringing you into **a good land, a land of brooks of water,** of fountains and springs, that flow out of valleys and hills; 8 "a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey;

**c. Houses they did not have to build,** houses that were **filled with all kinds of goods.** The Canaanites were great businessmen and great builders. You know how hard it is to afford a house now, so imagine Israel's joy!

**d. Wells they did not dig.** They had sufficient water for their needs and their animals and farms.

**e. Vineyards they did not plant** but from which they could enjoy good wines. God was thinking of their happiness.

**f. Olive plants to produce the good olive oil.** This plant was essential to Israel's survival -for food, oil, and medicines.

**g. Fruit trees of many varieties and large numbers.** Solomon even imported exotic fruit trees later. What enjoyment!

#### **4. God, in his love, established Israel in Canaan and provided them with everything they needed to do their work.**

**Jeremiah 31:3** The LORD has appeared of old to me, saying: "Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love; Therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you.

#### **5. Lessons:**

**a. God uses "means" to accomplish his purpose.** This is why it is **contempt of God** to be praying for miracles and avoiding work. (Israel had to fight!) Miracles can happen, but that is not normally how God works. So if you want a wife, look for one. Meet others. Ask others for help. If you are sick, get some medicines, and eat better and exercise.

**b. Take the time to praise God for the details of his provisions, things that help you to be established and do the work of promoting Christ's kingdom.** Praise God for safety in this country, abundance of food and clothing, wonderful means of transportation, comfortable homes to live in, and wonderful pleasures of life.

**c. When you have all these blessings, remember the goal: The dominion of Christ in all the earth. God's gifts must never end with you.** It is true you are not called to crush the enemy...but you are called to conquer the enemy...with the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God.

**d. It is not God's fault if you don't take possession of the Land.** You have all the tools – his Word and his Spirit. Don't blame God that the world is not as Christian as it ought to be! Don't blame God if life is difficult for you.

## **God's people pulled out of the pit of provocations**

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.

### **1. Even with all those rich gifts, God's people dug a hole for themselves and rebelled against God.**

Deuteronomy 32:15 "But Jeshurun grew fat and kicked; You grew fat, you grew thick, You are obese! Then he forsook God who made him, And scornfully esteemed the Rock of his salvation.

### **2. How did they do this?**

**a. The Israelites put God's law behind their backs.** God's law was a lamp to their feet and a light to their path, but they placed his lamp and light behind them. *Who searches for something he wants and then throws it behind him?*

**b. The Israelites then killed those who would remind them of God's goodness and reminded them how they should be faithful.** They killed God's prophets. They continued to do so throughout their history.

**Matthew 23:37** "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!

**Acts 7:52** "Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers,

**c. The Israelites intermarried with non-believers!** A great provocation.

**d. The Israelites became obsessed with money.** They loved money more than the God who gave them money.

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.**

### **3. So God let Israel fall into a pit, a deep pit, for provoking him – betraying him – and loving another.**

God allowed them to sell themselves under the control of their enemies, enemies who would crush them.

### **4. And yet, when they cried to God (after betraying him and killing his prophets) God delivered them.**

You can see this throughout the time of the judges, but also during the time of the Babylonian captivity. So many times they sold themselves and came so close to ruin.

### **5. Lessons:**

**a. There are many people today in churches who like the look of Christianity but they reject the demands of God, and so they reject the prophets of God – elders and pastors.**

**b. As a result, the church is in a deep hole!** How many people could name all 10 of God's laws? How many know that you are saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone? How many know how God is to be worshipped? How many people play their part in the work of the church? How many sing God's songs of judgment? About 80% do nothing in churches.

**c. Pastors now die younger than most other people.** Many have become disillusioned and depressed. Many are leaving the ministry. So there is evidence of the church killing God's prophets.

**d. Turn pastors' mourning into joy by listening to their faithful teaching.** If you don't, God will hold you responsible.

## **God's people pulled out of the pit of pride**

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.**

### **1. Even after God pulled them out of the pit into which they fell for rejecting God's prophets and his message, the Israelites regularly dug the pit of pride and jumped in. (V29)**

**They felt blessed because of themselves and their work and forgot Jesus who would obey and suffer for them**—the one who was the cause of their blessings. They became like swelling toads. This was particularly evident before the Babylonian captivity when Judah was thriving and rich but exploited the poor and ignored the worship of God. They ignored the Spirit of God crying through the mouths of the prophets.

## **2. Look at the details of the pattern of Israel's pride.**

**In their pride they treated God's laws as suggestions, not commands.** They literally shrugged their shoulders and stiffened their necks against the yoke (law) of God. This was a pattern.

Zechariah 7:11 "But they refused to heed, **shrugged their shoulders**, and stopped their ears so that they could not hear.

But look what God told them.

Leviticus 18:5 'You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does, **he shall live by them**: I am the LORD.

**They forgot that God's "yoke is easy and his burden is light."** They forgot that yokes kept them safe and brought blessings.

## **3. So God sent the Israelites into captivity, even to foreign lands like Assyria, Babylon, Philistia, and Moab.**

## **4. And yet, God delivered them, after a while, because of his tender mercies. (V28)**

## **5. Lessons:**

**a. Pride continues to cause the church today to change how it worships God, as the church thinks it knows what is best.** God is not amused. God is insulted. Do you show care to one who insults you?

**b. Not wanting to seem condescending (and accused of thinking less of other religions), many have ignored sharing the Gospel with those who are destined for hell.** Conquer the world for Christ. That brings glory to God and good to you!

**c. If you want profit – true profit, follow the ways of God.**

Isaiah 48:17 Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, The Holy One of Israel: "I am the LORD your God, Who teaches you to profit, Who leads you by the way you should go.

**d. Notice God's power over your enemies!** When God sets you free, no enemy can keep you entrapped.

## **Conclusion:**

God **established Israel in Canaan permanently** with incredible wealth. But God's people treated him – the Gift-Giver- with contempt and provoked him with their rebellion, idolatry, **provocations, and pride!**

Brothers and sisters in the Lord Jesus:

**1. Watch your heart!** Focus on God who has given you all the temporal and eternal blessings of this life and don't focus on the blessings God has given you in this life.

**2. If you do fall into a pit of sin, cry out to the one who loves you!** Don't call for help based on how good you are, because you aren't. Call on God for help based on who Christ is! He is your Savior. He loved you!

**3. Help others who are in a pit –a pit of eternal condemnation (for the non-believer) or maybe just a temporary pit (for the believer).** Be bold. **Is there a risk they might be offended? Yes.** But there are those who badly need help... And a rebuke, or encouragement might be all that they need!

Finally: If you are not a Christian, you are in a deeper pit and have no hope of rescue! While you are buried under the dominion of sin and death, and you are heading to that eternal, torturous pit called hell, there was one who conquered sin, death, and hell -Jesus. Call to him and he will rescue you. That's his promise to all who call.