

The Strength Found In Gratitude

Some work stretches us thin, not because we don't care but because we care so deeply. When your work is more than a job – when it's a calling – the weight can feel heavy. As Thanksgiving approaches, it's easy to get swept up in the noise of full schedules and growing to-do lists. God's people knew this kind of weariness. In Nehemiah's time, after the walls of Jerusalem were rebuilt, they turned to God's Word for strength. True renewal doesn't come from what we accomplish but from Who sustains us. Let's see how gratitude, rooted in God's Word, became their source of strength and how it can be ours, too.

[Read Nehemiah 8:1-6.](#)

Led by Ezra and Nehemiah, the burned-down, broken walls of Jerusalem had been rebuilt in a mere 52 days despite heavy strife and opposition. This was miracle of God-sized proportions. As a result, the people made a request of Ezra.

What was their request?

How did the people respond when he complied with their request?

Sometimes the only thing strong enough to revive our weary hearts is the Word of God itself. When Ezra began reading from the Book of the Law (i.e., Israel's instruction manual for walking faithfully before God), the people were overcome with gratitude. Thanksgiving, prayer, reverence, and praise for God's enduring faithfulness, even in their disobedience, could not be contained. ***When was the last time God's Word stirred gratitude in your heart, reminding you that even in a weary season, He is still faithful? Take a moment to recall that experience and thank Him for meeting you there.***

[Read Nehemiah 8:8-10.](#)

Why do you think people began to weep when they heard the Words of the Law read?

Have you ever been brought to tears when reading God's Word? Why do you think that happens?

Undoubtedly, the Israelites were convicted by the words they heard. So much disobedience in their past led to 150 years of no progress. God's Word can do that sometimes. Hebrews 4 reminds us that the Word of God penetrates our hearts. Scripture draws us back to Him to receive the mercy and grace He so willingly offers through Jesus. No wonder we weep! However, there is a message of hope. ***What did Ezra tell the people to do instead of grieving or mourning?***

Once we have repented, we get to let go. The weariness caused by our sin burden is replaced with a heart of gratitude, and the joy of the Lord becomes our true strength. Joy is powerful! Not only did Ezra remind them of this, but he also implored them to be a blessing to others as well. This Thanksgiving, let gratitude be your strength as you remember the source of your joy! ***Who is God asking you to bless this season?***

Happy Thanksgiving!

Lord, thank You for being my constant source of strength. When I am weary, remind me of Your faithfulness. Restore my joy, renew my spirit, and help me to see Your hand at work in every moment of my day. Amen.

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