

## **God Of Mercy**

Stand up and praise the LORD your God, who is from everlasting to everlasting. Blessed be your glorious name, and may it be exalted above all blessing and praise. You alone are the LORD. You made the heavens, even the highest heavens, and all their starry host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. You give life to everything, and the multitudes of heaven worship you.

**Nehemiah 8:5-6**

## **Shout For Joy To The Lord**

You are the LORD God, who chose Abram and brought him out of Ur of the Chaldeans and named him Abraham. You found his heart faithful to you, and you made a covenant with him to give to his descendants the land of the Canaanites..... you have kept your promise because you are righteous. You saw the suffering of our forefathers in Egypt; you heard their cry at the Red Sea. You sent miraculous signs and wonders against Pharaoh, against all his officials and all the people of his land, for you knew how arrogantly the Egyptians treated them. You made a name for yourself, which remains to this day. You divided the sea before them, so that they passed through it on dry ground, but you hurled their pursuers into the depths, like a stone into mighty waters. By day you led them with a pillar of cloud, and by night with a pillar of fire to give them light on the way they were to take. You came down on Mount Sinai; you spoke to them from heaven. You gave them regulations and laws that are just and right, and decrees and commands that are good. You made known to them your holy Sabbath and gave them commands, decrees and laws through your servant Moses. In their hunger you gave them bread from heaven and in their thirst you brought them water from the rock; you told them to go in and take possession of the land you had sworn with uplifted hand to give them.

**Nehemiah 9:7-15**

## **Forever**

But they, our forefathers, became arrogant and stiff-necked, and did not obey your commands. They refused to listen and failed to remember the miracles you performed among them. They became stiff-necked and in their rebellion appointed a leader in order to return to their slavery. But you are a

forgiving God, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love. Therefore you did not desert them, even when they cast for themselves an image of a calf and said, 'This is your god, who brought you up out of Egypt,' or when they committed awful blasphemies.

Because of your great compassion you did not abandon them in the desert. By day the pillar of cloud did not cease to guide them on their path, nor the pillar of fire by night to shine on the way they were to take. You gave your good Spirit to instruct them. You did not withhold your manna from their mouths, and you gave them water for their thirst. For forty years you sustained them in the desert; they lacked nothing, their clothes did not wear out nor did their feet become swollen. **Nehemiah 9:16-21**

## **Faithful Love**

You gave them kingdoms and nations, allotting to them even the remotest frontiers. They took over the country of Sihon and Og. You made their sons as numerous as the stars in the sky, and you brought them into the land that you told their fathers to enter and possess. Their sons went in and took possession of the land. You subdued before them the Canaanites, who lived in the land; you handed the Canaanites over to them, along with their kings and the peoples of the land, to deal with them as they pleased. They captured fortified cities and fertile land; they took possession of houses filled with all kinds of good things, wells already dug, vineyards, olive groves and fruit trees in abundance. They ate to the full and were well-nourished; they reveled in your great goodness. **Nehemiah 9:22-25**

## **His Love Endures**

But they were disobedient and rebelled against you; they put your law behind their backs. They killed your prophets, who had admonished them in order to turn them back to you; they committed awful blasphemies. So you handed them over to their enemies, who oppressed them. But when they were oppressed they cried out to you. From heaven you heard them, and in your great compassion you gave them deliverers, who rescued them from the hand of their enemies.

But as soon as they were at rest, they again did what was evil in your sight. Then you abandoned them to the hand of their enemies so that they

ruled over them. And when they cried out to you again, you heard from heaven, and in your compassion you delivered them time after time.

You warned them to return to your law, but they became arrogant and disobeyed your commands. They sinned against your ordinances, by which a man will live if he obeys them. Stubbornly they turned their backs on you, became stiff-necked and refused to listen. For many years you were patient with them. By your Spirit you admonished them through your prophets. Yet they paid no attention, so you handed them over to the neighboring peoples. But in your great mercy you did not put an end to them or abandon them, for you are a gracious and merciful God.

Now therefore, O our God, the great, mighty and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love, do not let all this hardship seem trifling in your eyes—the hardship that has come upon us, upon our kings and leaders, upon our priests and prophets, upon our fathers and all your people, from the days of the kings of Assyria until today. In all that has happened to us, you have been just; you have acted faithfully, while we did wrong. **Nehemiah 9:26-33**

## **A God Like You**

### **PRAYER**

Lord, these are our brothers and sisters that we have been hearing about. They were all under the cloud and they all passed through the sea; they were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. They all ate the same spiritual food and drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ. But the end result was disastrous. You were not pleased with them, and their bodies were left scattered all over the desert.

We need to learn from their example. Help us to not set our hearts on evil things as they did. Keep us from loving other things more than you. Forgive us for idolizing success, and loving being accepted by those around us. Forgive us for loving mammon. Forgive us for not honoring our bodies as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to you. May we see them as to be set apart for your dwelling. Keep us from grumbling, from whining at you, that things aren't going just like we think they should be going. Thank you for warning us this morning, for reminding that we can quickly go astray from the path of righteousness. Some of us are too self-assured this morning, assuming that our standing firm is automatic. You are faithful, O God. When we are tempted this week, we know that you have promised a way out, and that we will not be tempted more than we can bear. Even

better than that, we ask as Jesus prayed that you would keep us from temptation. In your name, Jesus, we pray these things. Amen.

**My Savior, My God**

**OFFERING**  
**Now And Forever**

**SERMON**

**A God Like You**