

Nehemiah 9:1-38

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Preacher: Nathan Raynor

[0 : 00] All right, and as you're getting yourselves settled, let me add to your settling, take out your copy of God's Word, and turn to the Old Testament.

Throughout this summer, most of you would be probably a more fair assessment of that, but I'm going to work to catch you up and show you where we've been so that you can really grasp hold of where we are now in the book.

Just in brief, the nation of Israel was sent into captivity. This was a judgment brought on them by God, first with the Assyrians and then the Babylonians. This was something that was promised to them by the prophets, and because they didn't turn from their wicked ways and turn back to God, God brought this judgment upon them.

And where we are now is post-exilic Israel. They've now been sent back. The world power has shifted from the Babylonians to the Persians, and they have given them permission to go back to their homeland.

Some 90 years that starts the process before where we are now in Nehemiah. Nehemiah serves here. We see him serving as the governor as he was appointed by the king of Persia.

[1 : 29] Prior to that, he was serving as the cupbearer to the king, and it was Nehemiah that was brought this news that the wall had yet to be rebuilt around the city. And that grieved him because it was evidence that the people of God were not in a good place.

The city, the capital, was still in ruins. And as such, that was an affront to the majesty of God. The state of God's people showed the world, the nations around them, how good God was, in fact, to them.

And so here we see God returning his goodness to the people and using the man, Nehemiah, to accomplish that work. So we've been working through this. We've seen opposition to the work. He goes back. He gets this opposition. They work in spite of that. They complete the wall in 52 days. And we can see now that there's this revival beginning to happen, a returning to, a rejuvenation of the people of God, wanting to follow the goodness of God.

We've come now to chapter 8. And this is where many would say that the real revival begins, although I would argue that it's been happening all along, but it certainly seems to kick into high gear at this point.

[2 : 43] There's a fervency that picks up in it as they come together for a feast called the Feast of Trumpets. Rosh Hashanah was taught in the Old Testament that they should do this thing.

And it was a celebration meant to celebrate the coming Day of Atonement, which would happen nine days later. I think it's actually eight days later. I'd probably say eight days later on the ninth day of the month, which was the great day that the high priest went to the Holy of Holies and made sacrifice for the people of God.

The whole thing meant to foreshadow the coming of Christ and the full and final sacrifice for the church. This is what they were coming together to celebrate.

So all the Israelites were estimating 30,000 to 50,000 gather, and they asked Ezra, the priest-scribe, to come and open up the Word of God, and he reads from it for half of a day. And we see a structure set out where it's explained. This is where we've been spending our time the last two weeks. I intended to do it in one, but we talked about if revival is to come on God's people, there will be some evidences of that, and that they will be praying.

[3 : 49] We can see that Nehemiah is a book of prayer. Nehemiah was certainly a man of prayer, beseeching God to work on behalf of His people. And it will be continued in prayer.

We also saw that the people of God will reestablish the Word of God as the ultimate authority in their lives. And that's what we see happening in chapter 8. They no longer make excuses.

They no longer try to justify their way. But they say, God's way is the right way, and His Word is the authority over our living. The proper response to that is you see them mourn.

They recognize how far removed their lives are from the holy standard that God has set up for them. They see this and they begin to mourn. You can see this beginning in verse 9 of chapter 8. But because of the special nature of this day, what this day was meant for in Jewish culture, they're encouraged to rejoice. And they do. We see verse 17.

[4 : 49] And there was very great rejoicing. So the Word of God now has been established as the ultimate authority. And we see now coming back into chapter 9, a new season of repentance.

A new level of contrition on their part. Before we get there though, I want to say to you that the things I'm presenting to you are not formulaic.

It's not that if we as the people of God will get these four things I'm presenting that we're going to observe here right, then we will be in a state of revival. Or God will bring revival to us, a special close visit of His Spirit.

But certainly these are things that should be true of the people of God. Recall that Ezra has been here for 14 years, faithfully teaching the Word of God, calling the people back to His way.

Revival wasn't happening for him, was it? But suddenly the Spirit comes, sovereignly works in the hearts of men, and things take off. They take on a new fervency.

[5 : 59] Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones, a man I would commend to you, he died in 1981, but for almost 30 years he was a minister of Westminster Chapel in London.

A wonderful man to read. Some of you may be familiar with his daughter, Sally Lloyd-Jones, who wrote the Jesus Storybook Bible. Said this of revival, you cannot revive something that has never had life.

So revival by definition is first of all an enlivening and quickening and awakening of lethargic, sleepy church members. Suddenly the power of the Spirit comes upon them.

They are humbled. They are convicted of sin. Then as a result of their quickening and enlivening, they begin to pray. New power comes into the preaching of the ministers, and the result of this is large numbers are converted.

So a revival is not something we can put on a calendar. It's not a thing to schedule that belongs on a sign out in front of a building.

[7 : 01] It cannot be advertised in that way. A revival is a visiting of the Spirit of God in a new way, in a freshening way, in a way that causes us to return.

As religion seems to be on the decline, I think that America is primed for this thing. If you look at the history of revivals, I believe we're primed for that to happen once again.

So keep in mind, these are not formulaic, but if revival is God sent, God's people will be praying.

They will reestablish the Word of God as the ultimate authority in their lives. And we can observe from chapter 9, the people of God will recognize their defiance of God and view His chastisement or His punishment as just.

This is a particularly remarkable mark of revival. So, we see here, and I'm going to give you a quick summary at the beginning of chapter 9, on the 24th day of the month, so first day of the month, Feast of Trumpets, Ezra reads from the Law, 24th day of the month, they come back together and we can see that they've been driven into a deep repentance for their sins.

There's three hours again of reading of the Word of God and three hours of confession and of worshiping. You can see in verse 1 that they come together with fasting and sackcloth and with earth on their heads, which were all signs of this contrition.

[8 : 31] The sackcloth would have been cloth bags made of goat hair. It would have been very, very coarse. It was worn to remind them of how terrible their sin was.

The earth on their heads was more than likely, typically done was ashes. So it represented the sacrifice that needed to be made on their part. So it's this visible outward, we are sinners.

We have offended God. And they were publicly displaying this with one another. They had come to realize through reestablishing the Word of God as the authority in their lives, having it read and taught to them, we see it again here on the 24th day, being read to them, that God is infinitely holy, and so His law is infinitely holy.

Therefore, any transgression, any transgression, from what in your mind might be the greatest transgression to what in your mind might be the very littlest transgression, right? For God, they are all an infinite offense.

This ought to cause us to repent. This ought to cause us to mourn. Because true repentance recognizes, first and foremost, that sin is primarily vertical in its offense.

[9 : 50] Our good God, the Creator of heaven and earth, the One that lavishes on us, abounding love, is the One who's primarily offended by our sin.

We certainly sin against others. There certainly is a horizontal process of that. And repentance ought to appropriately make reparations for those types of things.

You've sinned against a brother, you should go to him and make those things right. But firstly, we should make ourselves right with God. True repentance can be seen, as Charles Spurgeon said, and I quote, when a person's repentance becomes as notorious as his sin.

Everybody knows of your sin, everybody should know of your repentance. One person knows of your sin, that person should know of your repentance. Your sin was a private matter, there's no need for the repentance to go beyond.

And here we see the nation of Israel publicly displaying to everyone, everyone should know how very, very, very offensive my sin is to God, clothing themselves and sackcloths, fasting, putting ash or earth on their heads.

[11 : 01] That's what they're putting on display. We are a wretched, sinful people. We have offended God. if you don't feel this for your sin, your view of God is too small.

You need to have your vision expanded for God and His holiness. You need to see that He has a standard that we have all failed to live up to. Even as those who have been delivered by Christ, who have the Spirit of God working within us, the ability now to not transgress the law, we have failed at so many points.

Now, properly, we see here, there's a traditional understanding in Reformed communities. We would all probably agree to this. It's an altogether biblical understanding that confessions of faith are necessarily preceded by deep contrition.

That people need to recognize their transgression of the law. That ought to be a reality. I have sinned against the most holy God and this grieves me. My end is destruction.

Because of my status, I am cut off from Him. I worship the devil, is what Jesus said. And therefore, we're broken by that, but then we're turned to joy because of the work of Christ.

[12 : 25] And we've seen this happen already back in chapter 8. We see the mourning and then they're instructed to don't mourn, be joyful. There's this day of atonement that's coming on your behalf.

Be filled with joy as a result. But I think what we often neglect is that the Christian life is going to run in cycles of contrition and joy. Repentance and joy.

That is the life of the believer. And here we see the evidence of that. Right? It's now 24 days later. They've been filled with joy. The record there in verse 17 of chapter 8.

And there was very great rejoicing. And then it doesn't say and then they went about their merry way and their life and did their American thing. Right? No. They continue to study the Word of God. They continue to have new revelation of how very sinful they were. And they were moved back into a cycle of repentance. So that cycle is a cycle of deeper repentance and increasing joy.

[13 : 23] Deeper repentance and increasing joy. And so on. Have you ever stopped to reflect on what Jesus said in Matthew 5. 4? Blessed are they that mourn.

Some have understood this to mean those who mourn say over a lost person. Right? That we're so sad of the sin of the world. Or somebody who dies. They mourn.

And this is a promise of God to come close and comfort in those times. In fact, it finishes for they shall be comforted. But we've come to understand that what Jesus is actually talking right here is the state of a person.

Not a time somebody dies I mourn at that time. But who they actually are. So catch that. If you're a Christian your life is going to run in these cycles.

What we mourn over is our sin. That we still carry around the baggage of our flesh. That our flesh has been spoiled by this. We have a new nature.

[14 : 18] That's what we're going to talk about with baptism. We can walk in that new nature and yet we still fall back into this sinful state as Paul laments in chapter 7 of Romans.

Oh, I do the things I don't want to do. But what does he say here? That we are blessed. We are filled with an abiding joy even as we mourn.

This is coming off the hip. I don't remember who said this. You've heard me and Wes quote this before, but a man who I owe credit to and I can't give it, once said that the gospel all at once both gladdens and abases the soul.

That's what it ought to do to you. You ought to feel pretty crummy about your performance, but you ought to be overjoyed that God is working in you to bring about perfection.

This should be the process that goes on in your life. I want people to leave on Sunday morning so overjoyed, but I want them to leave because they know that Christ is at work in them to accomplish his goodwill, not because I give you some kind of a pep talk and make you feel pretty good about what you accomplished this week.

[15 : 34] That the particular sin we addressed that week, you handled well, and so you can walk out and say, good, gold star for me. Gold star for Jesus, right?

He's the one working in you to accomplish these things. Man, I say some weird stuff off the hip. So we're going to read. Here we go. So remember, if the Bible is God sent, God's people will recognize their defiance of God and view his chastisement as just.

We're going to begin in verse 5b. So the gathering has happened, they've been reading, they've been confessing, and then we see a group of the Levites, we've got a couple of different groups of Levites here, say to them, stand up and bless the Lord your God from everlasting to everlasting. Blessed be your glorious name which is exalted above all blessing and praise. Then we launch into a prayer together. The Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament adds at this point, and Ezra said.

So, possibly, I don't know where that comes from, but possibly Ezra is leading this prayer. I don't think it really matters at this point though. So, beginning in verse 6, you are the Lord, you alone.

[16 : 54] You have made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their hosts, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them, and you preserve all of them, and the host of heaven worships you.

They praise God as the God of creation. Verse 7, you are the Lord, the God who chose Abram, and brought him out of Ur of the Chaldeans, and gave him the name Abraham.

You found his heart faithful before you and made with him the covenant to give to his offspring the land of the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Amorite, the Perizzite, the Jebusite, and the Girgashite.

And you have kept your promise, for you are righteous. They praise him as the God of Abraham.

Verse 9, And you saw the affliction of our fathers in Egypt, and you heard their cry at the Red Sea, and performed signs and wonders against Pharaoh and all his servants, and all the people of his land, for you knew that they acted arrogantly against our fathers.

And you made a name for yourself, as it is to this day. And you divided the sea before them, so they went through the midst of the sea on dry land, and you cast their pursuers into the depths as a stone into mighty waters.

[18 : 03] By a pillar of cloud you led them in the day, and by a pillar of fire in the night, to light for them the way in which they should go. You came down on Mount Sinai, and spoke with them from heaven, and gave them right rules and true laws, good statutes and commandments.

And you made known to them your holy Sabbath, and commanded them commandments and statutes and a law by Moses your servant. You gave them bread from heaven for their hunger, and brought water for them out of the rocks for their thirst.

And you told them to go in to possess the land you had sworn to give them. They praised him for being the God of the Exodus, the people of Israel. Verse 16, But they and our fathers acted presumptuously and stiffened their neck and did not obey your commandments.

They refused to obey, were not mindful of the wonders that you performed among them, but they stiffened their neck and appointed a leader to return to their slavery in Egypt. But you are a God ready to forgive, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and did not forsake them.

Even when they had made for themselves a golden calf and said, This is your God who brought you up out of Egypt, and had committed great blasphemies, you and your great mercies did not forsake them in the wilderness.

[19 : 20] The pillar of cloud to lead them in the way did not depart from them by day, nor the pillar of fire by night to light for them the way by which they should go. You gave your good spirit to instruct them, and did not withhold your manna from their mouth, and gave them water for their thirst.

Forty years you sustained them in the wilderness, and they lacked nothing. Their clothes did not wear out, and their feet did not swell. And you gave them kingdoms and peoples, and allotted to them every corner.

So they took possession of the land of Sihon, king of Heshbon, and the land of Og, king of Bashan. You multiplied their children as the stars of heaven, and you brought them into the land that you had told their fathers to enter and possess.

So the descendants went in and possessed the land, and you subdued before them the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, and gave them into their hand with their kings and the people of the land, that they might do with them as they would.

And they captured fortified cities and a rich land and took possession of houses full of all good things, cisterns already hewn, vineyards, olive orchards, and fruit trees in abundance. So they ate and were filled and became fat and delighted themselves in your great goodness.

[20 : 30] Praise him for sustaining them, the God of the sustenance in the wilderness, and the conquering of Canaan. Verse 26, Nevertheless, they were disobedient, and rebelled against you, and cast your law behind their back, and killed your prophets, who had warned them in order to turn them back to you, and they committed great blasphemies.

Therefore you gave them into the hand of their enemies, who made them suffer. And in the time of their sufferings they cried out to you, and you heard them from heaven. And according to your great mercies you gave them saviors who saved them from the hand of their enemies.

But after they had rest, they did evil again before you, and you abandoned them to the hand of their enemies, so that they had dominion over them. Yet when they turned and cried to you, you heard from heaven, and many times you delivered them according to your mercies.

And you warned them in order to turn back to your law. Yet they acted presumptuously and did not obey your commandments, but sinned against your rules, which if a person does them, he shall! Praise him as the God of the judges and of the prophets.

Now, catch at this point, they're getting fairly caught up to speed. Ezra, if he's the one praying at this point, has covered the Old Testament narrative.

[22 : 06] Praise God all along the way for the great things he has done for the people of Israel. And I want you to hear this carefully. This is not a history that's removed for us. This is God's special people, his called ones, which we are now that, the church.

The gospel has advanced that out beyond the borders of a nation, of a bloodline. And this now belongs to us. This is our history. These are our people that were let out, that acted wickedly, that God was good to just the same.

The promises here and the praises are ours as well. Now here's the request beginning in verse 32. Now therefore, our God, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God who keeps covenant and steadfast love, let not all the hardship seem little to you that has come upon us, upon our kings, our princes, our priests, our prophets, our fathers, and all your people since the time of the kings of Assyria until this day.

Yet you have been righteous in all that has come upon us, for you have dealt faithfully, and we have acted wickedly. Our kings, our princes, our priests, and our fathers have not kept your law or paid attention to your commandments and your warnings that you gave them.

Even in their own kingdom and amid your great goodness that you gave them, and in the large and rich land that you set before them, they did not serve you or turn from their wicked works. Behold, we are slaves this day in the land that you gave to our fathers to enjoy its fruit and its good gifts.

[23 : 36] Behold, we are slaves, and its rich yield goes to the kings who you have set over us because of our sins. They rule over our bodies and over our livestock as they please, and we are in great distress.

Because of all this, we make a firm covenant in writing. On the sealed document are the names of our princes, our Levites, and our priests. So see the recognition here on their part.

They see that they have defied God. They have stated that now over and over and over and over again. But they also see that God is right and just and good.

Notice the praises that they give Him all throughout this. First in verse 6, you are righteous. Then in verse 6, you are the Lord, you alone.

Verse 8, you are righteous. Verse 17, but you are a God ready to forgive, gracious, merciful, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love.

[24 : 48] Verse 25, they praise Him for His great goodness. Verse 32, you are God, our God, the great, the mighty, the awesome God who keeps covenant and steadfast love.

And I think kind of the hinging verse for us here that wraps this up for us in such a nice little neat package is verse 33. Yet you have been righteous in all that has come upon us, for you have dealt faithfully and we have acted wickedly.

In spite of all these good things that you have done for us, look at this great history that we have as the people of God. We look back across it and we see your consistent faithfulness.

You're never changing. Your loving kindness is abounding to us. You just keep on being good and we keep on rebelling against you. And we're so quick in our arrogance to look at them and say, those foolish Israelites, what was their problem?

I mean, he records here the work of the golden calf. They were not very far out of Egypt having been delivered. An ocean split in front of them.

[26 : 03] They walked through it. It crashed behind them and destroyed an army. They were being led by a pillar of fire and a pillar of cloud which existed when they cast the golden calf.

Doesn't that not just in some way seem insane to you that they were doing this thing? That they were saying this image that we created, this is what led us out of Egypt. But we are the same way. We are equally foolish because we have this history and we have our own. Study church history. Look at the faithfulness of God.

The very fact that you have sitting in your lap or opened up on some device the words of God translated in your language is a mighty work of God. This thing has been tried to be killed throughout the ages and yet it perseveres.

Men have died bringing this book to us this morning. We have such a rich, rich history. How about your own life? If you're truly a believer, you've experienced repentance.

[27 : 06] You've experienced how very, very ugly your sin is. You've felt the depth of that. You've seen God in His holiness and you know there was no way you could measure up to that.

And yet in Christ you've been delivered. You've experienced the kind of joy that comes from that. You've been! You've been delivered. Eternal end was destruction and yet someone paid the price fully for you.

You just believe in that. You place faith in them and you've been delivered. You've been ushered back into the kingdom. You are now a son of the living God. Why does that history not come into our minds?

Right? Look at the amazing things God has done on our behalf and yet here we are just like the Israelites turning back away back to our sin.

Look at these important words. Verse 16 and 17. There are two rather incredible buts in the text and I say it that way on purpose because I want you to remember it.

[28 : 07] There's some incredible buts in this text. Two of them. Verse 16 but they and then verse 17 but you.

Those are precious precious words. God has been good to us but we but then right back we can say but you.

God is God. We don't affect who he is and how he operates. He is self-existent. His very title he gave to Moses to tell the people tell them I am has sent you.

The very thought of that word is that he is self-sufficient. You've heard me say before that everything plugs into him but he plugs into nothing.

This is the but you that we get to bank on when the but we is playing out in our lives. Two incredible buts.

[29 : 11] We continue to sin against our God even though he's shown us so much goodness but he continues to be good and faithful to us. This should move us to repentance beloved.

This should move us to hate our sin and to love him more. To not be complacent. To not make excuses but to see that the word of God is the authority. It is the authority whether you recognize it or not.

But to begin to recognize it in your life. And begin to arrange your life accordingly. because you know your God loves you and your appropriate response is a love for him in keeping his commands.

The American church and ours has much room for repentance. We were putting together a preaching schedule for Thursday night and this year October 31st falls on a Thursday night and so

most of you immediately think of Halloween but it's also Reformation Day.

It's the day that Martin Luther nailed the 95 theses on the door of the Wittenberg church. And I was just thinking about that like how we probably should do something that night for that. And the thought that came into my head was that I probably needed to write my own thesis and put it on our door.

[30 : 24] There wasn't another church that needs what I have to say about it but there's plenty of work to be done here amongst we do some things really well.

I think we have some things right. We try to be faithful in the way we arrange church. Some of you will say this is a strange church. It's a lot different. We just try to line up with what we see the Word of God telling us we ought to do. Good for us.

Right? But boy do we fail at so many points as a congregation. This work of revival, this type of repentance, this level, this depth of contrition, is going to show up when God sends it amongst us. And my question is do we long for that type of thing? Do we want our sin exposed? If we could put it on the screen, use the technology, would you want it exposed up on the screen?

Everything that you thought, every emotion that you've had, played, for all of us to see? It's what the Israelites were doing. They were putting on sackcloth.

[31 : 33] They were fasting, ashes on their head. They knew that the people of God needed to see, I'm a sinner too. I am in desperate need of God's grace in my life.

Would we be willing for this type of thing to happen? Jay turned me on to a book this week by Jonathan Edwards called The Surprising Work of God. I had never heard of it until Jay showed it to me.

Sadly, I'm going to give his copy back and I'm going to buy my own soon to continue reading it. Listen to what he said as he observed what was going on during the Great Awakening, which he was one of the major leaders in, a catalyst for this near work of God.

He's speaking of converts. He says, there's a great deal of difference in the distinctness of these awakenings. Genuine God-sent revival awakenings. Some people who have not had such a clear sight of God's justice in their condemnation still mention things that plainly imply it.

They develop disposition to acknowledge that God is just and righteous in declaring that he will inflict punishment on those who sin. They know that they are undeserving of his comforts.

[32 : 44] Many times they did not have such a clear sight of it at the beginning. They have very clear discoveries of their unworthiness soon after their conviction along with being made humble in the dust before God.

So let me just sum up for you what he's saying. As a man who observed a genuine God-sent revival, people who were converting to Christ during this time reacted in this way.

They saw the depth of their sin and they also saw that God was just and right and holy. Just like the people in Nehemiah's day recognized that it was proper that God should punish them.

It was the right thing for him to do because their sin was great and grievous. This is the thing that we ought to also do. Many of us grew up in good Christian homes and were moral and have yet to really see fully unfolded before us the depth of our sin.

We really act in a lot of ways as if God owes us something. I've lived a good life. I've done my thing. I've gone to church. I've done on the mission trips. God owes me.

[33 : 54] God owes you nothing. You're a sinner. You're an enemy of his. Cut off. He doesn't owe you anything. He freely gives you the gift of grace because he loves you.

This is that attitude that should be set amongst us. Recognizing the depth of our sin, it's an offense to this holy God. Why would he ever forgive me? Why would he ever do anything good for me?

Look at what I have done against him. And that's when we turn to Christ. We see that God poured out his wrath for our sin on Christ.

The punishment has been played and we place our faith in him. We recognize that the person, the work of Christ is the way in which we get back in right standing with God.

Our righteousness is found in Christ. This is a supernatural work of the Spirit of God. When the Spirit of God draws the Word of God, we see this happening here, draws the Word of God from its scabbard and begins to apply it to the hearts of men.

[35 : 01] Slices it, dices it, julian's fries, gets in there and starts working in our hearts. This is what happens. This is the evidence that will take place.

So we can say, yeah, we're repentant people. Sure, yeah, we get the depth of sin until we begin to see this kind of repentance happen. The kind that Spurgeon spoke of. The repentance is as notorious as the sin itself. It's not the work that's taking place in our lives. I'm going to show you two New Testament examples of genuine God wrought repentance. The first being the prodigal son. Don't turn here. I'll have you turn to the next one. The first being the prodigal son, Luke 15 21. This is the parable that Jesus told. You see the return of the son. He's gone. He said to his dad, I wish you were dead. Give me my share of the inheritance. He's gone. He's lived lavishly. He's wasted it all. He's gone and lived as one contrary to the way his father would have him live. But he returns to him and he says, Father, I be called your son.

[36 : 14] I get that. I'm not coming to you because I expect anything of you whatsoever. The second one, 2 Corinthians chapter 7. Please do turn here with me. So I hope you get that 2 Corinthians is the follow-up letter to 1 Corinthians.

The second letter that Paul wrote to the Corinthian church. He was pretty hard on the Corinthian church in his first letter. He was setting straight a lot of things that needed to be set straight. Listen to what he says here beginning in verse 8. For even if I made you grieve with my letter, I do not regret it though I did regret it for I see that the letter grieved you though only for a little while. So catch that. He says even if I made you grieve with my letter, I don't regret it now even though I did because it grieved you. That saddened him, these people that he loved. But he recognized it only was for a little while.

Verse 9. As it is, I rejoice not because you were grieved but because you were grieved into repenting. For you felt a godly grief. So that you suffered no loss through us.

[37 : 40] For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret whereas worldly grief produces death. For see what earnestness this godly grief has produced to you but also what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what longing, what zeal, what punishment.

He's overjoyed. He's happy that it brought about grief because the grief led to repentance. It's the same picture of what's happening here to the Israelites in the book of Nehemiah.

Broken, weeping over their sin. Visibly displaying how distraught they are over this and then calling on God for the deliverance of their souls.

praise God that even when the but they and the but we exists, the but you is quick to come along behind it.

Join me in prayer.