

**Study Questions for the September 6, 2020 Sermon:
“How to Handle Sin”
Nehemiah 9**

1. In verse 9:5 we see the Levites call the people to move from lamentation over their sins, to rejoicing. If you felt moved to help a spiritual sister/brother move from lamentation to rejoicing, what would you say? To what scriptures might you refer?
2. Verse 1 states that the Israelites were assembled *with fasting and in sackcloth, and with earth on their heads*. So they used outward expressions of their emotional/spiritual state. If there is anything you do to help put you in the proper frame of mind for a spiritual activity, please share.
3. Verse 2 says the Israelites separated themselves from all foreigners. In the modern-day church:
 - a. What would be an equivalent action?
 - b. When would be an appropriate time do it?
4. Pastor Paul stated that, during times of repentance and lamentation, our focus should be on God, not our sins. Explain his rationale for this statement.
5. Verses 6 through 31 present a condensed history of Israel.
 - a. Why was it beneficial for the Israelites to hear that?
 - b. In America, which is comprised of a multitude of ethnic groups, do we share a common history?
6. Pastor commented that in the West, people see themselves as discrete, independent units. Consequently we do not readily lament historical or corporate sins. Can you recall any verses that teach we are accountable as a group?
7. Verse 18 recalls one of the low-points in Jewish history. While Moses was away, the people made a golden calf and credited the calf with their rescue from Egypt. One good principle for understanding Scripture: If we are just outraged at the behavior of others, we are missing the point. What lesson from this event might we apply to ourselves or our society?

8. Pastor made a point, well-supported by Scripture, that both sin and obedience have consequences. ALWAYS! If we believe that, how do we differ from those that believe in the law of Karma?

9. Homework: Gather together, discuss what the Church needs to repent of, and pray for forgiveness. If you did that, please share your experience.