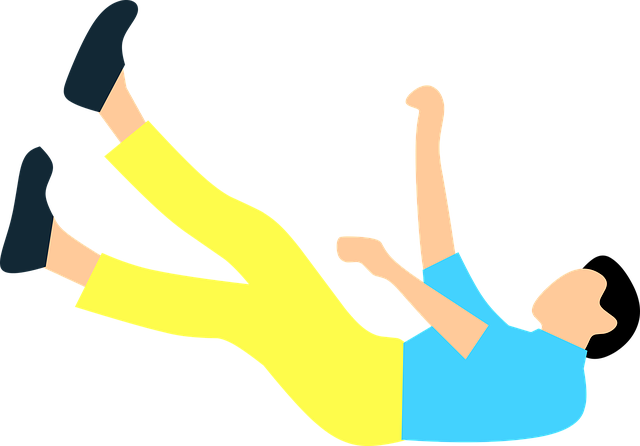
**THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK**

**STARTING OVER Neh.9**



A loss of a loved one, job loss, a bitter divorce, a long, lonely prison sentence, starting over can be tough. Restarts are not easy; it takes a whole lot of effort to get up after it seems like you have failed miserably. How do we start over when life seems to have knocked you off your feet? Israel was in the same position, having been in captivity for seventy years, yet they had the courage to start over. You may wonder how they did such as it seems a near impossible task? With Nehemiah, Ezra, and Zerubbabel, leading the way, they put this plan into action. First, they realized their condition (sin) and they began to fast v.1. *Now in the twenty and fourth day of this month the children of Israel were assembled with fasting, and with sackclothes, and earth upon them.* The word will direct and quicken prayer, for by it the Spirit helps our infirmities in prayer. The careful study of God's word will more and more discover to us our own sinfulness, and the plenteousness of his salvation; thus, it calls us to mourn for sin, and to rejoice in him. Every discovery of the truth of God, should render us more unwearied in attendance on his sacred word, and on his worship.

2Timothy 2:15 *Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.* Secondly Israel separated themselves from all strangers.V.2 *And the seed of Israel separated themselves from all strangers, and stood and confessed their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers.* Israel separated themselves from all of the pagan people in order to be pleasing to God, *we* also must separate ourselves from the world with its sinful nature. 2.Cor. 6:17 *Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate says the Lord and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you.* Verse three tell us that they stood up in their place and read the book of the law of the Lord their, one fourth part of the day, another fourth part they confessed their sins, confession comes before worship Matt.5:23-24 Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the alter, and there rememberest that thy brother hast ought against thee, leave thy gift before the alter and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. Then they worshipped God. Israel also remembered God’s manifold mercy v.19-31. Israel being mindful of God’s mercy made a covenant with God. Can you remember what the Lord has done for you? Are you willing to follow Israel’s example and come to the Lord? Always remember that God will take all our failures and turn them into success stories. He is able.