**Saturday 13th June**

Nehemiah 9:19-20

“Because of your great compassion you did not abandon them in the wilderness. By day the pillar of cloud did not fail 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.”

I’ve been reading through the book of Nehemiah recently and finding that there is so much that resonates with our current situation. It is an extraordinary story of how the ruined walls of Jerusalem are rebuilt by a returning band of exiles under the leadership of Nehemiah. Miraculously, the work is completed in an astonishing 52 days, despite opposition. Then there is a national revival - a return to the fear of the Lord. Today’s verses are a part of a prayer of repentance and recommitment. In it, the people remember the faithfulness of God to them. What comes out clearly, running like gold through the chapter is that despite Israel’s continued rebellion, again and again God provides, guides, forgives and restores his people. What a gracious God we serve!! Despite the ways in which we regularly fail Him, it is His nature to show compassion - He does not turn away from us when we return to Him.

*Father, thank you for the mercy and grace that we have received from you. So many undeserved riches that you have lavished on us! We thank you that it is your nature to have mercy, and that because of Jesus we can know our debt paid in full! Lord, we offer you our lives laid down in grateful response. Please instruct our hearts by you good Spirit so that we will walk in your ways - the ways that lead to life in all its fullness. In Jesus name. Amen*

