

# PRAYING WITH A BROKEN HEART

REBUILD & REPAIR: ENGAGING THE WORLD WITH NEHEMIAH · NEHEMIAH 1:5-11 · JUNE 11, 2023 · PASTOR MATT ERICKSON

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*“Lord, the God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with those who love him and keep his commandments, let your ear be attentive and your eyes open to hear the prayer your servant is praying before you day and night.” (Nehemiah 1:5-6)*

## Beginning with the Greatness of God (Nehemiah 1:5-6a)

- The greatness of God’s being
- The greatness of God’s promises

## Confessing Sin Before God (Nehemiah 1:6b-7)

- The sin of self and community
- The sin against God and God’s commands

## Calling Upon the Faithfulness of God (Nehemiah 1:8-10)

- Remembering the story of God and the promises of God
- Praying Scripture

## Asking God to Act (Nehemiah 1:11)

- Specific requests for action
- Specific requests for favor with authorities

## Waiting Upon God (Nehemiah 1:1-4; 2:1)

- Giving time for prayer
- Four months of prayer

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What is one of the most memorable times of prayer that you have ever experienced. Why was it memorable for you?
2. This weekend at Eastbrook we continue our sermon series, “Rebuild and Repair: Engaging the World with Nehemiah,” by looking at Nehemiah 1:5-11. Take some time to pray, asking

God to speak to you as you read His word. Then, whether you’re alone or with others, read that portion of Scripture aloud.

3. Background: Nehemiah, part of the Hebrew exiled people since Babylon overran Jerusalem in 587 BC, served as a cupbearer (1:11) to King Artaxerxes of Persia, who reigned 464-423 BC. The events of Nehemiah 1-2 take place roughly around 445 BC, likely following the events of the book of Ezra.
4. Read Nehemiah 1:1-4 again. What is the report that Nehemiah hears back from his kinsmen about Jerusalem’s situation? How does he respond to this news?
5. The prayer of Nehemiah in verses 5-11 has three basic parts. In the first part (verses 5-7), Nehemiah calls out to God in praise and repentance. Why do you think Nehemiah begins in this way?
6. The second part of Nehemiah’s prayer (verses 8-9) expresses a call for God to be faithful to His promises. What is the basis of Nehemiah’s prayer here? You may want to look at Deuteronomy 30:4; Psalm 106:47; Jeremiah 42:12; and Ezekiel 11:17 for background.
7. The third and final section of Nehemiah’s prayer (verses 10-11) is a call for restoration, but with a specific end point. What Nehemiah asking for generally and specifically in his prayer?
8. What is one thing you learn from Nehemiah’s approach to prayer here?
9. What is one thing God is revealing to you through this study? If you’re on your own, write that down, pray over it, and share it with someone this week. If you are with a small group, share your answers with one another before closing in prayer.

## DIG DEEPER:

- Memorize Nehemiah 1:5-6
- Read through Nehemiah’s prayer (Nehemiah 1:5-11), and then either use it as a basis for your own prayers or write out your own Nehemiah prayer to God.
- Explore prayer in Scripture by watching or listening to sermons from the Eastbrook preaching series, “Great Prayers of the Bible”: [eastbrook.org/sermons/series/great-prayers-of-the-bible/](http://eastbrook.org/sermons/series/great-prayers-of-the-bible/)
- Consider reading a book on prayer this summer. Here are some possibilities:
  - Richard J. Foster, *Prayer: Finding the Heart’s True Home*
  - Paul E. Miller, *A Praying Life*
  - Anthony Bloom, *Beginning to Pray*