

Today, we’d like to see the title of “Broken Wall” in the book of Nehemiah 1:1-11

To Online Word’s people on the earth, we’d like to suggest 3 Questions.

Q1. In verse 5, “And I said: “I pray, LORD God of heaven, O great and awesome God, *You* who keep *Your* covenant and mercy with those who love You and observe Your commandments,” when we begin a prayer, what point is the most important?

Q2. In verse 6, “please let Your ear be attentive and Your eyes open, that You may hear the prayer of Your servant which I pray before You now, day and night, for the children of Israel Your servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel which we have sinned against You. Both my father’s house and I have sinned,” what matters can we see in the Nehemiah’s prayer?

Q3. In verse 11, “O Lord, I pray, please let Your ear be attentive to the prayer of Your servant, and to the prayer of Your servants who desire to fear Your name; and let Your servant prosper this day, I pray, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man,” for I was the king’s cupbearer,” what can we learn in his particular prayer related to his job position?

**(Background) Captivity Return**

Bible	References	World History
Darius the Median (Daniel 5:31)	Short reigned for about 3 years (Belshazzar slain)	Nebuchadnezzar; Nabonidus; Belshazzar (Babylonians Kings 586-536 BC)
Cyrus (Ezra 1:1-2; 2:2, 64, 65)	1 <sup>st</sup> Return (536 BC) “about 5,000” Zerubbabel (Governor); Jeshua (Priest)	Cyrus (536-530 BC)
Ahasuerus (Ezra 4:6)		Cambyses (530-522)
Artaxerxes (Ezra 4:7)	Cease to construct the temple in 534 BC (Ezra 4:21; “14 years cased”) by adversaries (Samaritans – interracial Jews carried away by Assyrians; Ezra 4:1-2, 15)	Sudo Smerdis (522) Darius I (521-486)
Darius (Ezra 6:1)	Haggai + Zechariah in 520 BC (Exhorting prophets; Ezra 5:1-2; Haggai 1:1; Zechariah 1:1); Temple finished (Ezra 6:14-15 “4 years taken”- from the 2 <sup>nd</sup> year to the 6 <sup>th</sup> year of Darius)	
Ahasuerus (Esther 1:1)	Esther’s story	Xerxes [Ahasuerus] (486-465)

Artaxerxes (Ezra 7:1)	<u>2<sup>nd</sup> Return</u> (458 BC) (Ezra 7:1-10:44) “about 2K” Ezra (Priest) “spiritual revival”  <u>3<sup>rd</sup> Return</u> (444BC) Nehemiah (Governor of Judah) (Nehemiah 1:1-13:31) “Rebuilding City Wall & Gates”	Artaxerxes I (464-423)
Darius (Ezra 4:5)		Darius II (423-404)

This chapter 1 was written by Nehemiah, likely about 9 years after the 2<sup>nd</sup> Return by Ezra in 458 BC.

**(Text)**

<p><sup>1</sup> The <u>words of Nehemiah</u> the son of Hachaliah.</p> <p>It came to pass in <u>the month of Chislev</u>, <i>in</i> the twentieth year, as I was in <u>Shushan</u> the citadel,</p> <p><sup>2</sup> that <u>Hanani</u> one of my brethren came with men from Judah; and I asked them concerning the Jews who had escaped, who had survived the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem. <sup>3</sup> And they said to me, “<u>The survivors</u> who are left from the captivity in the province <i>are</i> there <u>in great distress and reproach</u>. <u>The wall of Jerusalem</u> <i>is</i> also <u>broken down</u>, and <u>its gates</u> are <u>burned with fire</u>.”</p> <p><sup>4</sup> So it was, when I heard <u>these words</u>, that I sat down and <u>wept</u>, and <u>mourned for many days</u>; I was <u>fasting</u> and <u>praying</u> before the God of heaven.</p>	<p>1= the month of Chislev (9<sup>th</sup> month of the Hebrew calendar, December in our Gregorian calendar); Shushan (or Susa, the capital city of Persian Empire located in Babylon or Iraq)</p> <p>2= Hanani one of my brethren (of my biological brothers); The survivors... in great distress and reproach. The wall of Jerusalem... broken down... its gates... burned with fire (So sorrowful report; Israelites had special love of Jerusalem because it was the Israelites' holy city where the temple was built by Solomon, a capital city of united Israel and Judah. <sup>1</sup> <i>Psalm 137:5-6</i>; even if Nehemiah lived whole life in Babylon area, he also had so special love of Jerusalem, like a patriot. )</p> <p>4= these words (these sorrowful words of the report); wept and mourned for many days ... <sup>2</sup>fasting (natural consequence from the sorrow, like affliction, repentance, protection, or dedication, to humble himself before the Lord); and praying (fasting often followed by praying)</p>
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<sup>1</sup> *Psalm 137:5-6* If I forget you, O Jerusalem, Let my right hand forget *its skill!* <sup>6</sup> If I do not remember you, Let my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth— If I do not exalt Jerusalem Above my chief joy.

<sup>2</sup> Fasting is abstaining from eating and drinking, extending to from smoking, alcohol drinking, or any flesh desire – Sorrow (e.g. “the bridegroom taken away” in Luke 5:35), affliction (e.g., “they were sick” in Psalm 35:13; “the devil cast away” in Matthew 17:18-21), repentance (e.g. “Turn to Me with all your heart” in Joel 2:12), protection (“seek from Him the right way for us” in Ezra 8:21), or a dedication (before Jesus' first dedicated ministry on the earth in Matthew 4:2; before Paul and Barnabas dedicated as missionaries in Acts 13:2-3; Anna's dedicated prayer waiting for Messiah in Luke 2:37). Fasting is only before God, not before people (Matthew 6:16). Fasting itself is not always required in Matthew 9:14, although prayer is always required in 1 Thessalonians 5:17. However, fasting naturally comes out of our broken heartily prayers as a way of a fervent prayer by the Holy Spirit. Source: *Wayne Kim, “Chuck Smith's Theology,” (California: CCAH Press, 2010) p352*

<p><sup>5</sup> And I said: <u>"I pray, LORD God of heaven, O great and awesome God, You who keep Your covenant and mercy with those who love You and observe Your commandments,</u></p> <p><sup>6</sup> please <u>let Your ear be attentive and Your eyes open, that You may hear the prayer of Your servant which I pray before You now, day and night, for the children of Israel Your servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel which we have sinned against You. Both my father's house and I have sinned. <sup>7</sup>We have acted very corruptly against You, and have not kept the commandments, the statutes, nor the ordinances which You commanded Your servant Moses.</u></p> <p><sup>8</sup> Remember, I pray, the word that You commanded Your servant Moses, <u>saying, 'If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the nations;</u></p>	<p>5=Q I pray, Lord God of heaven (whom we are addressing is most important, e.g., Lord's prayer <sup>3</sup>Mat 6:9; persecution not to speak anymore in the name of Jesus <sup>4</sup>Acts 4:24); O great and awesome God, You who keep Your covenant <sup>5</sup>Deut 7:9; mercy with those who love You and observe Your commandments (listed God's natures or characters, somehow related to the subject matter of prayer)</p> <p>6=Q2 let Your ear be attentive .... (relationship between God and us should be restored – our sin separated us from God! <sup>6</sup>Isaiah 59:1-3)... I pray ... for the children of Israel (as the representative of a people of Israel!); confess the sins of the children of Israel (from the confession of sins, the sins were forgiven <sup>7</sup>1 John 1:9; the children of Israel included Nehemiah); we have sinned against You (Nehemiah's prayer as the representative even if he did not commit a particular sin, <sup>8</sup>Dan 9:11; Ezra 9:6)</p> <p>7= We have acted....(simply to list sins is a good way for prayer before God.)</p> <p>8= Remember ...saying (listed God's promises or words for our benefits, not God's benefits because God already knows them); If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the nations <sup>9</sup>Lev 26:33</p>
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<sup>3</sup> Mat 6:9 In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name.

<sup>4</sup> Acts 4:24 So when they heard that, they raised their voice to God with one accord and said: "Lord, You are God, who made heaven and earth and the sea, and all that is in them.

<sup>5</sup> Deut 7:9 "Therefore know that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments;

<sup>6</sup> Isaiah 59:1-3 Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened. That it cannot save. Nor His ear heavy. That it cannot hear.

<sup>2</sup> But your iniquities have separated you from your God: And your sins have hidden His face from you. So that He will not hear. <sup>3</sup>For your hands are defiled with blood, And your fingers with iniquity; Your lips have spoken lies, Your tongue has muttered perversity.

<sup>7</sup> 1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

<sup>8</sup> Dan 9:11 Yes, all Israel has transgressed Your law, and has departed so as not to obey Your voice; therefore the curse and the oath written in the Law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out on us, because we have sinned against Him.: Ezra 9:6 And I said: "O my God, I am too ashamed and humiliated to lift up my face to You, my God; for our iniquities (interracial spiritual marriages) have risen higher than our heads, and our guilt has grown up to the heavens.

<sup>9</sup> Lev 26:33 I will scatter you among the nations and draw out a sword after you; your land shall be desolate and your cities waste.

<p><sup>9</sup> <u>but if you return to Me</u>, and keep My commandments and do them, though some of you were cast out to the farthest part of the heavens, <u>yet I will gather them from there, and bring them to the place which I have chosen as a dwelling for My name.</u>'</p> <p><sup>10</sup> <u>Now these are Your servants and Your people, whom You have redeemed by Your great power, and by Your strong hand.</u></p> <p><sup>11</sup> O Lord, <u>I pray, please let Your ear be attentive to the prayer of Your servant, and to the prayer of Your servants who desire to fear Your name; and let Your servant prosper this day, I pray, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man.</u>"</p> <p><u>For I was the king's cupbearer.</u></p>	<p>9= but if you return to Me.... I will gather them from there... bring them to the place which I have chosen as a dwelling... <sup>10</sup> Deut 30:2-4</p> <p>10= Now ... You have redeemed... (relationship between God and us is restored)</p> <p>11= Q3 let Your servant prosper this day (let Nehemiah to rebuild the wall and the gate for God's glory) ; I pray, and grant him ("Your servant," Nehemiah) mercy in the sight of this man (the king Artaxerxes); For I was the king's cupbearer (Nehemiah's secular job position was the king's cupbearer to serve cups – wine, soup, or food to be safe from poison -- to the king; even our job positions secular from beginning may become godly job positions to serve God, as Nehemiah used his job position to speak to the king about the permission to rebuild city wall and gates for God's glory, e.g. apartment manager to permit residents a room to worship the Lord; Bartender the evangelist to customers unless he has a problem of drunkenness)</p>
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<sup>10</sup> Deut 30:2-4 and you return to the LORD your God and obey His voice, according to all that I command you today, you and your children, with all your heart and with all your soul, <sup>3</sup> that the LORD your God will bring you back from captivity, and have compassion on you, and gather you again from all the nations where the LORD your God has scattered you. <sup>4</sup> If any of you are driven out to the farthest parts under heaven, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you.