



GLC Weekly
(14 September 2022)

Nehemiah's Prayer & The Amazing Results: *GOD Judged & Then Restored Judah & Jerusalem, Lessons from Scripture 7*

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Nehemiah's name means "Jehovah comforts." He was a Jewish exile living in Susa, the capital of the Persian empire, serving as "the cupbearer to the king" (Nehemiah 1:1, 11). His brother Hanani and other men came from Jerusalem and reported on the conditions: "The remnant there in the province who survived the captivity are in great distress and reproach, and the wall of Jerusalem is broken down and its gates are burned with fire" (1:3). Nehemiah responded with great concern, "and wept and mourned for days," "fasting and praying before the God of heaven." Then he prayed this prayer:

"I beseech You, O LORD, God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who preserves the covenant and lovingkindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments, let Your ear now be attentive and Your eyes open to hear the prayer of Your servant which I am praying before You now, day and night, on behalf of the sons of Israel Your servants, confessing the sins of the sons of Israel which we have sinned against You; I and my father's house have sinned. We have acted very corruptly against You and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the ordinances which You commanded Your servant Moses. Remember the word which You commanded Your servant Moses, saying, 'If you are unfaithful I will scatter you among the peoples; but if you return to Me and keep My commandments and do them, though those of you who have been scattered were in the most remote part of the heavens, I will gather them from there and will bring them to the place where I have chosen to cause My name to dwell.' They are Your servants and Your people whom You redeemed by Your great power and by Your strong hand. O Lord, I beseech You, may Your ear be attentive to the prayer of Your servant and the prayer of Your servants who delight to revere Your name, and make Your servant successful today and grant him compassion before this man" [the king] (1:5-11).

During the days he was weeping, mourning, fasting, and praying, the Holy Spirit must have put within him the desire to go to Jerusalem and rebuild the walls and gates, and guided his mind in developing a plan of action with exactly what he would need. But he was the trusted cupbearer for the king and not free to leave his duties. Then King Artaxerxes noticed that Nehemiah was sad when serving him, and asked, "Why is your face sad though you are not sick? This is nothing but sadness of heart" (2:2). Nehemiah was "very much afraid," but highly respected by the king, and shared his burden with him. The king graciously responded, "What would you

request?” Nehemiah prayed a quick prayer “to the God of heaven,” and made his request to be sent to Jerusalem to “rebuild it.” The king granted his request, plus letters “for the governors,” a military escort, and all the timber he needed to rebuild – all “because the good hand of my God was on me” (2:1-8).

Questions: What do you see about GOD’s heart for His people? And for the city, land, and national territory He had entrusted to their forefathers? And His heart to restore? What can you imagine that He might want to do today through us, His people, and through pagan leaders to accomplish His good will on earth?

Pray for God’s people to discern the spiritual causes of our problems, and how God wants us to respond to Him as He corrects us, and co-labor with Him as He restores us. Keep praying that the Holy Spirit will “convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment” (John 16:8). Through it all, let us pray for a glorious restoration and advancement of God’s kingdom.

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