

The Prayer of Nehemiah

(May We All Have Such a Zeal for God)

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The Situation

After hearing how bad the devastation of Jerusalem was, Nehemiah mourned and wept for the city. For the report of those who came down from the city was not a good report, but one of devastation.

Now Nehemiah was the cup bearer for the foreign King Artaxerxes whom he and the rest of the children of Israel were servants to.

So that King noticed that Nehemiah was sad and thus we read: *“Then in the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was brought to me, I took the wine and gave it to the king. Previously I had not been depressed in the king's presence. So the king said to me, “Why do you appear to be depressed when you aren't sick? What can this be other than sadness of heart?” This made me very fearful. I replied to the king, “O king, live forever! Why would I not appear dejected when the city with the graves of my ancestors lies desolate and its gates destroyed by fire?”* (Nehemiah 2:1-3 NET)



Nehemiah Wept and Mourned

“The words of Nehemiah the son of Hacaliah. Now it happened in the month of Chislev, in the twentieth year, as I was in Susa the citadel, that Hanani, one of my brothers, came with certain men from Judah. And I asked them concerning the Jews who escaped, who had survived the exile, and concerning Jerusalem. And they said to me, “The remnant there in the province who had survived the exile is in great trouble and shame. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates are destroyed by fire.” As soon as I heard these words I sat down and wept and mourned for days, and I continued fasting and praying before the God of heaven.” (Nehemiah 1:1-4 ESV)

Nehemiah Prays for Himself and His People

“I said, “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.” (Nehemiah 1:5-7 NASB95)

“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.” Now I was the cupbearer to the king.” (Nehemiah 1:8-11 NASB95)

Conclusion

We as Christians should follow Nehemiah's example for his nation. For his heart was broken for what had happened to Jerusalem. So, we in like manner should be praying for not only our churches, but our fallen nation as well. For we can see that there is a lacking of power and unity among believers today. Also, we can see that our nation as a whole no longer embraces the true and living God. For even our currency which says: “In God We Trust,” is literally (and spiritually) slipping away through our fingers (and our hearts). Therefore, we need revival and we need it now. God help us to walk in the Spirit and take up the yoke of Christ and do that which we are called to do. For we are to be the salt and light of this world. Amen.

- “If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.” (2 Chronicles 7:14 KJV)
- “Come to me, all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me: for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest to your souls. For my yoke [is] easy, and my burden is light.” (Matthew 11:28-30 Webster)
- “This I say then, walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.” (Galatians 5:16-17 KJV)

- “You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet. "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.” (Matthew 5:13-16 ESV)

Below are those bible versions used in this article. I provided this information to help you in your study of God's word. Therefore: *“Study to show thyself approved to God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”* (2 Timothy 2:15 Webster)

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