

Restoring Foundations

Restoring Prayer: Nehemiah 1:1-11

Introduction:

The book of Nehemiah is closely linked with Ezra and is considered the second book of Ezra. The books of Ezra, Esther, and Nehemiah cover the history of Israel's return to Jerusalem and their homeland after the period of captivity in Babylon and Persia. Ezra is the earliest of the three books and covers the longest period of time. Esther is next in the sequence and partially overlaps with Ezra. Nehemiah is the final book coming after the events of both Ezra and Esther. The Prophetic ministries of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi also occur during these three books.

1. Read Nehemiah 1:1 & 2:1 with Ezra 7:6-9 and Esther 1:2. As the book begins where is Nehemiah and what is the significance of his location? What is the time frame given for the beginning of Nehemiah and how many years had passed from Ezra's arrival in Jerusalem?
2. Read Nehemiah 1:2-3 with Jeremiah 52:12-15 and Ezra 4:11-23. Who arrived in Susa to visit Nehemiah and what information was delivered? What events do you think caused the conditions described to Nehemiah?
3. Read Nehemiah 1:4 with Ezra 8:21-23, Daniel 9:1-3, Zechariah 7:1-14, and Matthew 6:16-18. What was Nehemiah's reaction to the conditions in Jerusalem? How is Nehemiah's reaction similar to Ezra and Daniel's? What additional information do you learn from Zechariah and Matthew about the focus of fasting and its importance?
4. Read Nehemiah 1:5-7 with Matthew 6:9-13. How does Nehemiah describe God as he begins his prayer? What is his request and his confession? How is Nehemiah's prayer similar to the model Jesus gave? How do you approach God in prayer and what can you learn from Nehemiah's prayer?
5. Read Nehemiah 1:8-10 with Deuteronomy 30:1-8. What does Nehemiah remind God about and what promises is he referring to? What does God say he will do to the people's hearts so that they can love him and live? What promises of God do you need to remember?
6. Read Nehemiah 1:11 with Genesis 40:1-3. What are the specific requests that Nehemiah makes of God? To whom is Nehemiah asking God to grant him favor with and what is Nehemiah's role with this man? What were the risks of this position and why would this make his prayer even more important?
7. What do you learn from Nehemiah chapter 1 and how can you apply this to your life, family, work and church?
8. For what in your life do you feel called mourn, fast, pray, and remind God of His promises so that He will act for His glory?