

Celebration 8:45 ~ Elevation 10:45
Pastor David Mitchell
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Nehemiah

GOD'S PLAN FOR RENEWAL

Renew Our Intimacy

Nehemiah 1

Historical background:
I Corinthians 10:5-12

Intimacy with God will grow out of a broken life:

Broken from significant losses in my life. Nehemiah 1:3

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.

Broken by the suffering of those you love. Nehemiah 1:4

When I heard these words, I sat down and wept and mourned for days...

Broken by removing all distractions to God. Nehemiah 1:4

... I was fasting and praying before the God of heaven

II Samuel 12:15-18; I Kings 21:20-29; Ezra 8:21-25

What part of your life is broken today?

From what do you need to fast in order to grow more intimate with God? (see digging deeper)

Intimacy with God will grow when you...

Grow in your knowledge of God's greatness. Nehemiah 1:5

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

Daniel 9:2-4; Jeremiah 25:11-12; 29:10-14; 32:17

Grow in your admission of your own sinfulness. Nehemiah 1:6-9

I and my father's house have sinned.

Isaiah 6:1-5; Ezra 9:6-15

Leviticus 25:3, 4; 26:32-34; Jeremiah 36:20, 21

Galatians 6:7-9; Hebrews 12:5-11

Grow in your understanding of who you are in Christ. Nehemiah 1:10, 11

They are Your servants and Your people whom You redeemed...make Your servant successful today...

Romans 8:16, 17; John 15:5-7

Digging Deeper in Nehemiah 1

Our new series is designed to renew our lives with our Lord and each other. In Nehemiah 1, this great leader has discovered the broken condition of the wall of Jerusalem which illustrates the broken condition of their hearts as well. Nehemiah does not get angry at God, reject God, ask “why me,” or blame Him for this predicament. He instinctively turns to the “God of heaven” and with great intimacy calls to Him. In so doing, Nehemiah reveals the very nature of an intimacy that God desires with all of us.

What part of your life is “broken” today? What losses are you experiencing? What suffering are those you love experiencing that is causing you pain? This is what Nehemiah was suffering from.

Read **Psalm 55:1-4, 17**. What was the psalmist’s problem and solution you can identify with?

Read **Psalm 42**. The Psalms are filled with broken heart messages. Meditate on this Psalm and how you should respond to your brokenness or how you can help another person.

Nehemiah fasted as he mourned before God. This was not a gimmick to gain favor with God. It truly evolved from His broken heart and desire to be intimate with God. Read the following passages and note what they teach you on the humility and dependence on God reflected in fasting.

II Samuel 12:15-18; I Kings 21:20-29; Ezra 8:21-25

What warning does Jesus have about fasting in **Matthew 6:16-18**?

Usually fasting is associated with food. However, you may need to fast from other things which distract you from being intimate with God. For example, consider how the following areas take up your time, energy, finances or thoughts so you are not intimate with God:

Busy schedule

Hobbies/Sports

TV/ Radio/ Newspapers

iPod, texting, IM, Facebook, MySpace, Cell phones, Computers, Video games, Internet surfing.

Drugs, alcohol, pornography

Possessions, financial investments.

Nehemiah grew in his intimacy with God because he knew God and His Word.

Read **Psalm 19 and 139** to grow in your adoration of God’s greatness. Try reading it in a modern translation in a quiet, open outdoor wilderness area.

Nehemiah grew because of his honest admission of sinfulness.

What do these verses teach you about your sinfulness before God?

Isaiah 6:1-5; Romans 3:23; Psalm 66:18; John 15:7; I John 4:20-22; James 4:3

Nehemiah grew because he knew his position as a person redeemed, owned and loved by God.

What is your position with God according to **Romans 8:18-17**?

Nehemiah called on God to make him successful. What is the only success that is possible as a child of God **John 15:5-7**?



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