



Nehemiah: The Cupbearer

Nehemiah 1:4-11 (ESV)

*“⁴ 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.”*

Prayer – speaking and listening to God

Fasting – setting aside food (or another life necessity/pleasure) to focus on seeking the Lord.

Why fast?

To seek the Lord related to [personal needs](#).

To seek [guidance](#) and [direction](#).

To seek the Lord in the midst of [distress](#) and spiritual [warfare](#).

To seek the Lord when facing a [national crisis](#).

To seek the [advancing](#) of God's Kingdom purpose.

How did Nehemiah pray?

“⁵ And I said, “O LORD God of heaven, the great and awesome God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments...”

Look up in [dependence](#).

“⁶ let your ear be attentive and your eyes open, to hear the prayer of your servant that I now pray before you day and night for the people of Israel your servants, confessing the sins of the people of Israel, which we have sinned against you. Even I and my father's house have sinned.⁷ We have acted very corruptly against you and have not kept the commandments, the statutes, and the rules that you commanded your servant Moses.”

Look inside with [confession](#).

“⁸ Remember the word that you commanded your servant Moses, saying, ‘If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the peoples,⁹ but if you return to me and keep my commandments and do them, though your outcasts are in the uttermost parts of heaven, from there I will gather them and bring them to the place that I have chosen, to make my name dwell there.’¹⁰ They are your servants and your people, whom you have redeemed by your great power and by your strong hand.”

Look back with [gratitude](#).

“¹¹ O Lord, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of your servant, and to the prayer of your servants who delight to fear your name, and give success to your servant today, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man.”

Look forward with [confidence](#).

Small Group Questions

1. Remind each other what God has broken your heart over. What is it that you're facing that you can't seem to do anything about?
2. How are you trying to rush in and fix that problem? What are you doing “on your own” to handle that tough circumstance?
3. Have you ever fasted before? If yes, what was that experience like for you? Where do you find yourself on that 5-part list of “why fast?”
4. If you are willing (personally or as a group), practice walking through the 4 points of prayer. What did you experience?