

Creekside Community Church: Working with God: The Book of Nehemiah
"Seeing What God Sees" (Nehemiah 1:1-11)
January 6, 2013
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Seeing What God Sees (Nehemiah 1:1-11)

Seeing the Problem

"The words of Nehemiah the son of Hacaliah. Now it happened in the month Chislev, in the twentieth year, while I was in Susa the capitol, that Hanani, one of my brothers, and some men from Judah came; and I asked them concerning the Jews who had escaped and had survived the captivity, and about Jerusalem. They said to me, "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." When I heard these words, I sat down and wept and mourned for days; and I was fasting and praying before the God of heaven." (vs. 1-4)

Seeing the Cause

"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. 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." (vs. 5-10)

Seeing the Solution

"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. (vs. 11)

For further thought and discussion:

Getting Started

1. What was helpful to you in this week's sermon? What didn't you understand?
2. If you could solve one problem – personal, family, church or community – what would it be and why?

Going Deeper

3. Please read Nehemiah 1:1-4. What do these verses reveal to you about the character of Nehemiah? The problem in Jerusalem is an old problem; why do you think Nehemiah is so concerned now? Can you think of situations that we accept which we should not? If we saw the world through God's eyes, what do you think we would mourn about?
4. Please read Nehemiah 1:5-10. Why is Jerusalem desolate and without walls? Why does Nehemiah confess his sins, his family's sins and his nation's sins? What does this suggest about what Nehemiah believed to be the true cause of Jerusalem's dilemma? Israel's historic problem was idolatry; substituting false gods for the true God. Do you think people struggle with idolatry today? How? What do you learn about God from these verses? Why is maintaining a continuous attitude of confession and repentance essential in solving the problems which confront us today? Why do you think many believers have a difficult time recognizing and taking responsibility for their own sin?
5. Please read Nehemiah 1:11. How does Nehemiah respond to seeing the problem and its cause from God's perspective? Why do you think that first seeing what God sees is essential to working with God and being used by God? Can you identify a problem which burdens you today? How could you be part of the solution?

Application:

What is one thing you learned from this week's passages that you will apply to your life?