

March 14, 2010

HOW TO HAVE REVIVAL  
NEHEMIAH 1:1-11

What is our greatest need today? Investors would say financial security, insurance agents would say protection, social workers would say feeding and clothing the hungry and poor, and educators would say more learning. We need Spirit filled Christians for revival. Revival that results in turning back to God that leads to repentance, restitution, reunited homes, changes lives, and love for God and others.

How does revival come? The answer is found in Nehemiah 1. After seventy years of captivity, 50,000 Jews went home and began to reconstruct the temple in Jerusalem. It took twenty years to complete the work. After ninety years the walls and gates of the city were still in ruins. Revival came by rebuilding the walls. There are broken down walls in our lives that need to be rebuilt. Some of the walls are trust, forgiveness, love, service, obedience, prayer, Bible study, and giving.

- I. RECOGNIZE ITS DEMAND (vs. 1-3). Nehemiah heard the call of God to rebuild the walls.
  - A. There was distress. The people were not together in unity, and they were compromising with the world. Today we face the distress of going where the world goes, saying what the world says, living like the world lives, and acting like the world acts.
  - B. There was dishonor – a reproach to God. They became comfortable in conditions unpleasing to God. There is dishonor when we try to live for God on one hand and the world on the other.
  - C. There was defenselessness – the walls were broken down and the gates were burned. They were a prey for every nation. Spiritual walls have been broken down in our day – walls of Bible study, family worship, morality, holiness, prayer, unity, accord, love, and trust. We need revival.
- II. RESPOND IN DESPERATION (v. 4). We tend to compare ourselves with others. We need to compare ourselves to Jesus. There are conditions that demand revival.
  - A. His contemplation – “he sat down.” He sought the face of God, and he was willing to be the means of revival. I want to be the means of revival coming to my heart, my home, and my church. Do you?
  - B. His compassion – “he wept” over the distress, the shame, and the destruction. When was the last time you wept over sins? Have you been a

shame to God? Are you a stumbling block to others? Does it matter? Where are our tears?

- C. His concern – he sat down, wept, and “mourned for days.” He was burdened over the neglect and indifference of the people of God. He couldn’t get over the burden.
  - D. His concentration – “he fasted.” Every hunger pain reminded him of the reason for his fast. He continued to pound the throne of heaven with his requests. Have you fasted? How much have we prayed? Some things come only by prayer and fasting.
  - E. His communion – “he prayed before the God of heaven.” He prayed day and night. Real prayer involves battle. Real prayer brings revival. We need to come to the point of desperation and dissatisfaction.
- III. REQUEST A DELIVERANCE (v. 6).
- A. The confession – “we have sinned.” How long has it been since you got hold of God’s ear and confessed, “I have sinned” and “we have sinned”?
  - B. The consecration – He prayed “day and night” for four months. When Jacob wrestled with the angel, he said, “I won’t let you go until you bless me.” Are you ready to pray this?
  - C. The conditions (v. 9) – “if you turn to me.” Revival is conditional upon repentance. The scripture says in 2 Chronicles 7:14 that God is waiting, willing, and longing to send revival to anyone who will repent. This chapter is an urgent appeal for us to turn from our sin to serve Jesus.
  - D. The claim – Nehemiah believed God and expected Him to do what He said He would do.

We need revival. What walls do you need built back in your life and in your church?