

Nehemiah's Dependence Upon the Lord

Today we will briefly look at Nehemiah and his dependence upon the Lord.

But before we do, I wanted to emphasize again that Hebrew word, **dibaq** (daw-bak).

Illust (Post-It Note possible meanings)

Remember King Hezekiah—he clung to, joined to the Lord like glue!

Let me share two instances how King David used it: (NIV-**dibaq** in bold italics)

- **Ps. 119:31** “I ***hold fast*** to your statutes, O Lord: do not let me be put to shame.”
KJ “stuck”—“I have stuck unto they testimonies”
statues=God’s Word, especially the first 5 books, but also any revelation from the Holy Spirit.
- **Ps. 101:3** “I will set before my eyes no vile thing. The deeds of faithless men I hate; they will not ***cling*** to me.”

The thesis verse that I put forth on the first Sunday of this series was **Jer. 29:13** (Turn to Jer. 29), where Jeremiah is quoting God: “You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.”

Quest. But who was this given to? **ILLUST.** Drink coaster—

Robertson Quilkin always stressed the importance of context. He would regularly say, “Context is King”. So, let’s examine the context of Jer. 29:13. **Read Jer. 29:4-14** (two readers: vs.4-9; vs.10-14)

3 Exiles to Babylon

In the biblical account, after the [Battle of Carchemish](#) in **605 BCE**, the Babylonian king [Nebuchadnezzar II](#) besieged Jerusalem, which resulted in tribute being paid by the Judean king [Jehoiakim](#).^[1] Daniel was exiled at this time. This was the first exile.

In the fourth year of Nebuchadnezzar II's reign, Jehoiakim refused to pay further tribute, which led to [another siege of the city](#) in Nebuchadnezzar II's seventh year (**598/597 BCE**) that culminated in the death of Jehoiakim and the exile to [Babylonia](#) of his successor [Jeconiah](#) (also known as Jehoiachin, his court, and many others; This was the 2nd exile.

Jeconiah's successor [Zedekiah](#) and others were exiled when Nebuchadnezzar II [destroyed Jerusalem in his 18th year](#) (**587-586 BCE**), and a later deportation occurred in Nebuchadnezzar II's 23rd year (582 BCE).

This book of Nehemiah shows his dependency upon God. **3 Returns after the exile**

- After the 70-year captivity, God people started returning to Israel.
 1. The first group was led by Zerubbabel in 538 BC. The Temple was rebuilt by 515 BC.
 2. The second group was led by Ezra in 458 BC where there was reform.
 3. Then Nehemiah led a 3rd group in return to rebuild the Wall in 444 BC.

- Nehemiah had risen to a position of prominence in the Persian Empire. He was a cupbearer to King Artaxerxes. He was practicing **Jer. 29:5-7!**

Read Neh. 1:1-4 This is when Nehemiah had heard his people were in great distress, and that the wall around Jerusalem was broken down. They were defenseless against their enemies. When he heard the news, he **wept** and **prayed for days**.

- **Read His dependent prayer to God: Neh. 1:5-2:1**
- I believe sincere **prayer** is one the clearest indicators of our dependence upon God!!
- **Quest.** How was Nehemiah being dependent upon God in this prayer.
 - **6** 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 committed against You; I and my father's house have sinned.⁷ 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. **8** Remember, please, the word which 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 those of you who have been scattered were in the most remote part of the heavens, I will gather them from there and bring them to the place where I have chosen to have My name dwell.'¹⁰ They are Your servants and Your people whom You redeemed by Your great power and by Your strong hand. **11** Please, Lord, may Your ear be attentive to the prayer of Your servant and the prayer of Your servants who delight to ^[a]revere Your name, and please make Your servant successful today and grant him mercy before this man."

v.6 He was dependent upon his God, that He hears and sees. As Nehemiah was praying, he was dependent on God and His character and attributes!

"**Day and night**" he was praying for the situation of the remnant that had returned to Judah.

vs.6-7 He does "**corporate confessions**", where he identifies himself with sins of his people of years gone by. **Quest.** How often do we do corporate confession for the sins the current worldwide church and the sins of the church in years gone by? —It is a legitimate prayer!

v.8 Nehemiah was **praying Scripture**, which Pastor Don emphasized—see **Deut. 4:25-31**

Quest. How long was he having **intense** emotional prayer before he approached King Artaxerxes? Kislev (1:1) to Nisan (2:1)

Illust. Show Jewish calendar.

Read Neh. 2:1-9

2 In the month of Nisan in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was brought for him, I took the wine and gave it to the king. I had not been sad in his presence before, **2** so the king asked me, “Why does your face look so sad when you are not ill? This can be nothing but sadness of heart.”

I was very much afraid, **3** but I said to the king, “May the king live forever! Why should my face not look sad when the city where my ancestors are buried lies in ruins, and its gates have been destroyed by fire?”

4 The king said to me, “What is it you want?” (Before Nehemiah answered he prayed)

Then I prayed to the God of heaven, **5** and I answered the king, “If it pleases the king and if your servant has found favor in his sight, let him send me to the city in Judah where my ancestors are buried so that I can rebuild it.”

6 Then the king, with the queen sitting beside him, asked me, “How long will your journey take, and when will you get back?” It pleased the king to send me; so, I set a time.

7 I also said to him, “If it pleases the king, may I have letters to the governors of Trans-Euphrates, so that they will provide me safe-conduct until I arrive in Judah? **8** And may I have a letter to Asaph, keeper of the royal park, so he will give me timber to make beams for the gates of the citadel by the temple and for the city wall and for the residence I will occupy?” **And because the gracious hand of my God was on me, the king granted my requests.** **9** So I went to the governors of Trans-Euphrates and gave them the king’s letters. The king had also sent army officers and cavalry with me.

v. 4 Then I **prayed**—Even during his time with the king, he is still praying.

v.8 “...the **gracious hand of my God** was on me...”. Nehemiah realized that his success before the king was because of God’s gracious hand upon him!

***Sincere prayer is one of the clearest indicators that we are **seeking** and **depending** upon God!

