



# DO SOMETHING GREAT.

## WEEK 02 A GREAT PRAYER TO A GREAT GOD

**READ: NEHEMIAH 1:4-11, PSALM 40**

### THINK

Upon learning of the state of Jerusalem and its walls, Nehemiah immediately, “sat down and wept and mourned for days, and continued fasting and praying before the God of heaven” (Nehemiah 1:4). Interestingly, Nehemiah’s prayer moves into confession, because Nehemiah recognizes they don’t simply have a building problem, a resources problem, or even a foreign occupation problem--the Israelites have a sin problem.

We look around at the state of our own city and our world, eyes widening in shock, in fear, in horror at times. As I write this, monsters loom near and far: the Gorge burns, DACA’s ending, gang shootings, riots, North Korea’s aggression, Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Jose stacking up to deliver their respective blows. And we have our own personal worries and secrets and problems to boot. Each one pacing outside the thresholds of our consciousness for the opportunity to pounce. So we toss and turn at night, minds racing to think our way out.

Instead of trying to handle it all, maybe it’s time to sit down before the God of heaven. Not just my God, your God, but the collective God of all creation. Our God is a God of the big picture and the small concern alike. He is listening when we come before Him in confession with broken spirits and contrite hearts. He is listening when we intercede on behalf of those far from Him. He is listening when we need His help. And He is faithful to keep every single one of the promises He’s made.

Today, when we hear His voice, when we’re burdened for our sin, our neighbors, our city, our world, may we not harden our hearts, but turn to our help, our deliverer, our God.

“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” (Nehemiah 1:11).

### PRAY

As we pray through a different Psalm each week, we will specifically focus our prayers in three areas: Our City, Our Church, and My Role. This week, we will be using Psalm 40 to guide our prayer time. Feel free to pray the Psalm directly back to the Lord, modifying words or phrases as you feel led, or simply use the following prayer prompts, adding any specific requests the Lord has placed on your heart.

#### OUR CITY

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Pray for deliverance on behalf of our city. Pray God’s salvation for those far from Him. Pray mercy over those in crisis. Pray our city will turn to the Lord and trust in Him.

#### OUR CHURCH

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Pray for greater trust in the Lord among the people of our church. Pray for boldness of the Spirit in sharing the message of God’s deliverance in our community and in our gatherings.

#### MY ROLE

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Pray for the Lord to reveal any sin you need to confess. Pray for the Lord’s will to rule in your life over your own. Pray for deliverance from any specific troubles you are facing. Rejoice in the Lord’s steadfast love and faithfulness. Thank Him for specific situations of deliverance in the past. Pray for boldness and a renewed commitment in sharing what the Lord has done for you with others.

# PERSONAL REFLECTION

Based on Nehemiah's prayer, how would you describe His relationship with God?

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If your prayer life was the sole basis for evaluating your relationship with God, how would you describe it?

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Where do you experience the greatest difficulties in prayer?

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From Nehemiah's prayer to David's psalm, what do these men believe about God's character?

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When you hear of bad things happening near or far or even in your own life, is your immediate response to come before the Lord in prayer?

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Have you ever prayed for deliverance or help and the Lord answered?

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In Psalm 40, David begins with, "I waited patiently for the Lord." When God seems to delay in answering your prayers, where are you tempted to turn for deliverance instead?

## GOING DEEPER

In the Jewish Bible, Nehemiah is joined with the book of Ezra, as they are both written by the same author. For additional context and to expand your study time this week, you may choose to read through Ezra 2:1-68. (We will plan to finish the entire book of Ezra as well throughout this series.)