

## The Recipe for Revival # 22

Nehemiah 9: 1-3

In our study of Nehemiah we spent a great deal of time considering the reconstruction efforts within Jerusalem. Under the leadership of Nehemiah the people had labored tirelessly, in the face of unrelenting opposition, completing the rebuilding of the wall in an unbelievably short amount of time. It is evident that they were aware of the Lord's provision in their lives, and in the wake of such a monumental achievement, the people began to seek the Lord. These parenthetical chapters, [8-10](#), are devoted to the spiritual renewal within Jerusalem.

Our text this evening is short in comparison to some of the passages that we have previously considered, but there is an abundance of truth in these verses. They reveal a genuine revival taking place in the lives of God's people. I think we would all agree that we are in desperate need of revival in our day. If we could only discover the truths revealed in these verses and apply them to our lives, we would be well on our way to experiencing revival as well. I want to consider the [ingredients](#) that are essential to a spiritual awakening as we think on: [The Recipe for Revival](#). The first ingredient needed is:

**I. Faithfulness** (1) – [Now in the twenty and fourth day of this month the children of Israel were assembled with fasting, and with sackclothes, and earth upon them.](#) Here we discover an interesting detail regarding revival. The month spoken of is the seventh month, Tishri. It is the same month alluded to in [Chapter 8:2 – And Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation both of men and women, and all that could hear with understanding, upon the first day of the seventh month.](#) There we found on the first day of the month the people called for the reading of the law of God. Now we discover that they are still seeking the Lord and spending time in His Word on the twenty-fourth day. For twenty four consecutive days, the people worshipped the Lord and heard His Word. Isn't that amazing? That is genuine faithfulness!

- Genuine revival will not come apart from faithfulness. We cannot approach the Lord and our service to Him casually if we expect to experience revival. It will require genuine commitment and faithfulness on our part. Just a few short prayers or a few minutes a day in His Word are not sufficient. I will go so far as to say that three services per week will not bring revival. We must get sincere and seek God faithfully if we are to have revival. We will have to be willing to seek the Lord for as long as it takes, consistently to experience revival.

**II. Fasting** (1) – We also find that they were [assembled with fasting](#). That too is interesting. In the previous chapter we discussed the feasts that they observed. The people had enjoyed a time of feasting and now they had come together in fasting.

- Fasting is something that most of us know nothing about and many would have to admit that they would be uncomfortable with. I can imagine the response I would get on Sunday morning if I revealed a desire for us to fast for a few days.
- I don't know how the majority feels, but there is a spiritual principle that we need to understand and apply to our lives. Often we come to church expecting to receive just what we need from the Lord but we are unwilling to give anything in return. We come expecting God to move in our midst and take care of all our problems, but there has been no preparation prior to the service. How about a fast of time? How about sacrificing some of the time we waste on ourselves and give it into the Lord? How about a fast for prayer? We need to get sincere and earnest when we pray. Fasting doesn't always have to be about going without food, but a willingness to sacrifice of ourselves in order to get in touch with God!

**III. Repentance** (1) – [Now in the twenty and fourth day of this month the children of Israel were assembled with fasting, and with sackclothes, and earth upon them.](#) The attire of the people reveals an attitude of brokenness and sorrow over sin. They adorned themselves with sackcloth to show their sincerity in repentance.

- Revival will never come without a genuine attitude of repentance. I fear that repentance is becoming obsolete in the modern church. We have become so accustomed to and complacent with sin that few ever sense the need for real repentance. God will not fill a dirty vessel. We need not expect His touch on our lives or services if we are living with unconfessed sin and dirty lives. We need the attitude of Jerusalem and of Ezra. Consider [Ezra 9: 3-8](#). Repentance is an essential ingredient for revival.

**IV. Separation** (2a) – [And the seed of Israel separated themselves from all strangers.](#) The people of Jerusalem separated themselves from the strangers in the land, those who brought an ungodly influence to their lives. They separated themselves from anything that would hinder their fellowship with God.

- Revival demands separation. I know that we are here to be salt and light and I understand that we must make ourselves available to the world in order to do that. However, we do not have to allow the world to pollute us and hinder our walk with God. We are to live sanctified lives, separated from the world and its evil influence. [2 Cor.6:17 – Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.](#) I wonder, if we were to be put on trial for our faith, would there be enough evidence to convict us? Are we separated enough from the world for them to even notice a difference? We must surround ourselves with the things of God if we are to serve Him!

**V. Confession** (2b) – [and stood and confessed their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers.](#)

Genuine repentance in [verse 1](#) brought confession in [verse 2](#). Not only was there a brokenness and awareness of sin, but they were willing to confess that sin before the Lord and seek forgiveness.

- We need to get to the place that we are aware of our sin and broken over it, but that alone is not enough. We must be willing to confess our sins before the Lord and seek His forgiveness. We must be willing to abandon our sin and seek the Lord. Genuine repentance involves a change in behavior; it takes a new course. Real repentance must include an honest confession of sin. If we aren't willing to be open and honest with the Lord, we need not expect Him to stir us spiritually.

**VI. Humility** (2-3) – In both of these verses we find the people standing before the Lord. This was not an act of arrogance or an attempt to receive recognition. They stood in humbleness and fear of the Lord. They sought to honor Him and stood in awe of His presence. They were seeking something from the Lord that they could not provide for themselves. They were admitting their inability and acknowledging the power of God.

- This is why I often desire us to stand as we read God's Word together. The act of standing doesn't provide anything special, but it reveals an attitude of the heart. We stand in reverence and humility before the Lord, seeking to hear from Him.
- Humility and recognition of the power and supremacy of the Lord are essential to revival. We will never experience it until we recognize our need for it and our inability to provide it. We must be willing to humble ourselves before God if we are to receive His blessing! [Is.57:15](#) – [For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.](#) [Jam.4:10](#) – [Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.](#)

**VII. Scripture** (3a) – [And they stood up in their place, and read in the book of the law of the Lord their God one fourth part of the day;](#) The people were hungry for the Word and sensed the importance of it in their lives. They knew that God's Word would guide them and strengthen them to live lives that pleased Him.

- I am thankful for what we have at Fellowship. There is a premium placed on the Word of God. It is the focus of our services. God's Word is preeminent among us. Many churches have lost their way. In far too many the Word is shared if time permits. It takes a back seat to singing and other aspects of the service. May we never lose our commitment to the Word!

- There is a personal aspect that we must consider. Fellowship may place a premium on the Word corporately, but how do we rate individually? Do you have a daily hunger for God's Word? Do you desire to feast daily from its truth? We are blessed beyond measure to have a copy of the Word. It reveals the very heart of God to us. It is within the Word that we find guidance for our lives and strength to face the obstacles of life.
- If we are to experience genuine revival, we must develop a personal passion for the Word. The people of Jerusalem stood for a fourth part of the day while the Word was shared. Surely we can spend some quality time in the Word each day!

**VIII. Submission (3b)** – *And they stood up in their place, and read in the book of the law of the Lord their God one fourth part of the day; and another fourth part they confessed, and worshipped the Lord their God.* As we consider these verses we discover that there was a lot of confession among the people. That is directly related to their time spent in the Word. The longer they heard the Word, the more they desired a closeness to God. The more of the Word they heard, the more sin it revealed. They were submitting their lives to the will of God revealed through His Word.

- It is clear that Jerusalem was experiencing revival. The Word of God brought profitable change to their lives. They had submitted to the Lord and were willing to follow Him. When we respond to the Word we are not left the same as before. The Word will change us and conform us to the image of God's Son. If we would only submit to the Word, we could experience real change that brings genuine revival.

**IX. Worship (3c)** – *And they stood up in their place, and read in the book of the law of the Lord their God one fourth part of the day; and another fourth part they confessed, and worshipped the Lord their God.* This wonderful experience culminated in worship of the Lord. The people had confessed their sin, humbled themselves before the Lord, and submitted to His will. This brought about an attitude of worship. They were experiencing God in a new way and on an entirely different level than before. Spiritual renewal resulted in heartfelt worship!

- That ought to be the desire of all our hearts. We ought to have a genuine desire to worship the Lord. Sadly, many times we have so many distractions and unconfessed sin that we are unable to truly worship. I personally want to draw nigh to Him so that I can offer unhindered worship. I can assure you, if we experience real revival, worship will follow. It will be the natural response. It will not have to be coaxed or worked up; it will naturally flow from the hearts of God's people!

This has been a wonderful and challenging passage of Scripture. It has revealed the Recipe for Revival. Surely we all possess some of these ingredients, but I sincerely doubt we have them all as they should be. Do you desire a move of God among us? We can have that if we want it enough. God is no respecter of persons. He sent revival to Jerusalem and He will send it to us.

Are you willing to seek the Lord for revival? I want more than I currently have. I want more for us as a church than what we are currently experiencing. Will you join me in an effort to see revival among us?