

## Nehemiah 1:1-4

**I. Problem: the walls of Jerusalem are in \_\_\_\_\_**

In 587 BC King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon razed Jerusalem to the ground

Diaspora: the dispersion of people from their \_\_\_\_\_

## A. Surprising news almost a century earlier in 538 BC

*"The Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus"* [Ezra 1:1]

*"The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the Lord; He turns it wherever he will."*

[Proverbs 21:1]

## B. Bad news: Nehemiah has fresh reason for \_\_\_\_\_

*"The remnant in Jerusalem are in great trouble and shame....the wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates are destroyed by fire."* [Nehemiah 1:3]

A literal problem with far-reaching \_\_\_\_\_, internal as well as external

## C. Two metaphors that remain relevant in 2018

## 1. We are \_\_\_\_\_ in this world

Abraham: *"I am a sojourner and a foreigner among you"* [Genesis 23:4]

*"To those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion"* [First Peter 1:1]

## 2. \_\_\_\_\_ are a common reality

## a. The greatest erosion comes from our own \_\_\_\_\_

Unrepentant sin *"wastes our bones away"* [Psalm 32:3]

## b. Corporate sin, over time, erodes a \_\_\_\_\_ of faith

Erosion is usual slow and gradual – drowsiness – \_\_\_\_\_

**II. Nehemiah's response**

*"As soon as I heard these words I sat down and wept and mourned for days, and I continued fasting and praying before the God of heaven"* [4]

## A. Intense \_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_ – *"I sat down and wept and mourned for days"* [4]

Nehemiah's life is good: he enjoys comfort, ease and affluence

Yet Nehemiah knows his true identity: he too is an \_\_\_\_\_

He aches because Jerusalem – the city he loves from afar – lies in ruins

*"Sadness of the \_\_\_\_\_"* [Nehemiah 2:2]

## C. Mourning born of \_\_\_\_\_

## D. Prayer

Nehemiah is a man of \_\_\_\_\_ --it is significant that he prays first!

With all the encouraging, constructive takeaways, we are left with \_\_\_\_\_

Left with our inability to help ourselves – left in need of a Savior

*"We are before you in our \_\_\_\_\_"* [Ezra 9:15]

This is how the OT ends – it leaves us longing for \_\_\_\_\_

**III. The Savior**

Jesus could have played it \_\_\_\_\_ – *"kept his distance"* --but he didn't!

He left the palace – left the right hand of the King to travel far

Jesus did more than take a risk – His \_\_\_\_\_ was to die for His people

God's requirement for obedience is fully gratified in Jesus