



REBUILDING GOD'S PEOPLE FOR GOD'S MISSION #2

FIRST STEPS TO REBUILDING YOUR LIFE

Nehemiah 1:4-11

When I heard this, I sat down and wept. In fact, for days I mourned, fasted, and prayed to the God of heaven. ⁵ Then I said, “O Lord, God of heaven, the great and awesome God who keeps his covenant of unfailing love with those who love him and obey his commands, ⁶ listen to my prayer! Look down and see me praying night and day for your people Israel. I confess that we have sinned against you. Yes, even my own family and I have sinned! ⁷ We have sinned terribly by not obeying the commands, decrees, and regulations that you gave us through your servant Moses. ⁸ “Please remember what you told your servant Moses: ‘If you are unfaithful to me, I will scatter you among the nations. ⁹ But if you return to me and obey my commands and live by them, then even if you are exiled to the ends of the earth, I will bring you back to the place I have chosen for my name to be honored.’ ¹⁰ “The people you rescued by your great power and strong hand are your servants. ¹¹ O Lord, please hear my prayer! Listen to the prayers of those of us who delight in honoring you. Please grant me success today by making the king favorable to me. Put it into his heart to be kind to me.” In those days I was the king’s cup-bearer.

Nehemiah 1:4-11 (NLT)

1 Corinthians 10:11 (NLT)

These things happened to them as examples for us. They were written down to warn us who live at the end of the age.

Romans 15:4 (NLT)


Such things were written in the Scriptures long ago to teach us. And the Scriptures give us hope and encouragement as we wait patiently for God's promises to be fulfilled.



- To mourn means to grieve over our loss and expressing our hurt to God.
- Abraham wept at the death of Sarah, his wife (Gen23:2)
- Jacob tearing his clothes and putting sackcloth as a sign of mourning and weeping over his son, Joseph (Gen 37:34)
- Joseph – 7 days of mourning over Jacob's death (Gen 50:10)
- Aaron and Moses – Israelite community mourned for 30 days (Numbers 20:29; Deuteronomy 34:8)

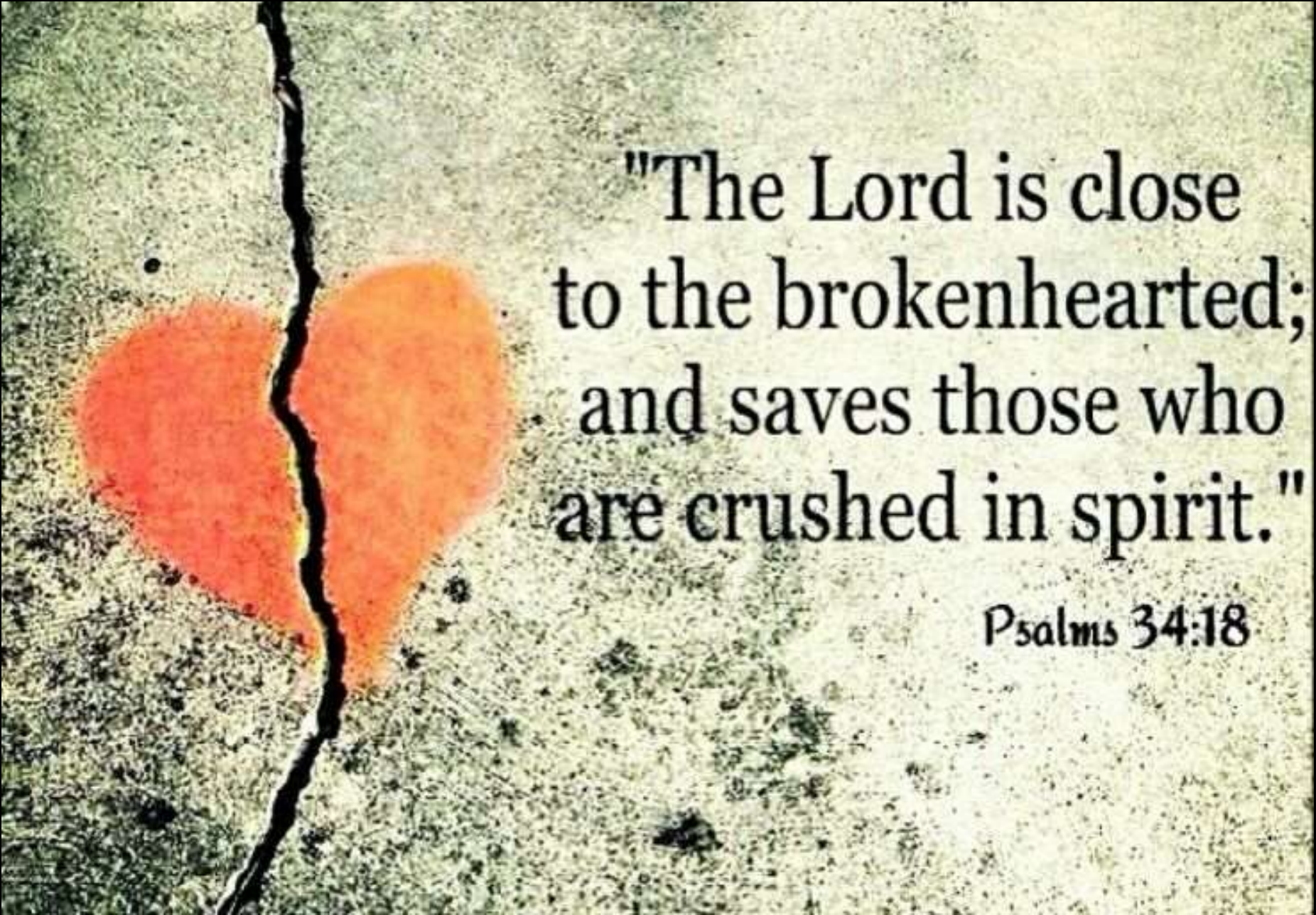
The Blessing of Mourning and Grieving

- Taking time to mourn, to grieve is not just expressing emotions but it is a process by which God speaks to us through his words, in our prayers and through circumstances as we look at the past.
- Mourning also brings us to the acute awareness of our powerlessness and to realize that we have reached the end of ourselves and have given up our self-delusions about control, power and protection.
- Mourning opens the door to one of God's greatest gifts in your life.



Blessed are they that mourn:
for they shall be comforted.

~ Matthew 5:4

A photograph of a weathered, light-colored concrete wall. A prominent vertical crack runs down the left side of the image. To the left of the crack, a bright red heart is painted on the wall. The heart is split by the crack, with the left half on the left side of the crack and the right half on the right side. The background wall is textured and shows signs of age and wear.

"The Lord is close
to the brokenhearted;
and saves those who
are crushed in spirit."

Psalms 34:18

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- Mourning brings us to a place that we can receive God's gracious favor and experience the reality of His presence.

Yet even now..
declares the LORD,

Return to Me

with all your heart - with
fasting and weeping
and mourning.

Joel 2:12

These rules (like fasting) may seem wise because they require strong devotion and pious self-denial and severe bodily discipline, but they provide no help in conquering a person's evil desires.



Colossians 2:23

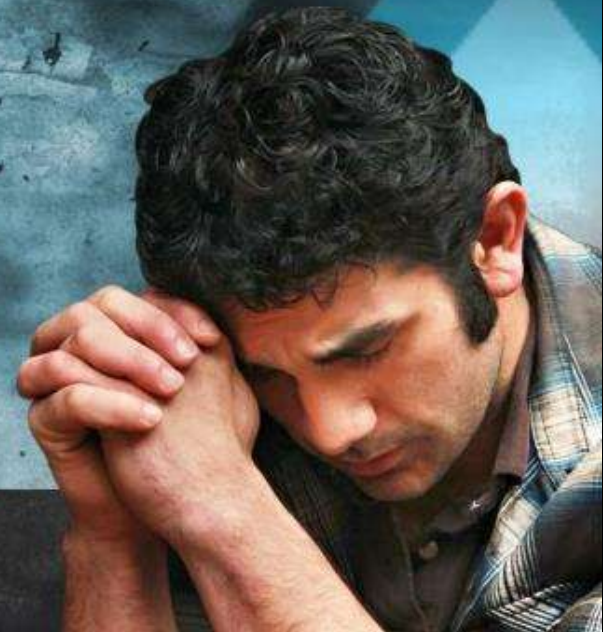
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SO I TURNED MY
ATTENTION TO THE
LORD GOD TO SEEK
HIM BY PRAYER
AND PETITIONS,
WITH FASTING,
SACKCLOTH, AND
ASHES.
DANIEL 9:3

**Now set your heart and your
soul to seek the Lord your God...**

1 Chronicles 22:19



Nehemiah's Prayer

1. Nehemiah teaches us to recognize who God is (Nehemiah 1:5-6a)
 - Ephesians 1:19
 - Prayer is dependence on God
2. Nehemiah teaches us to confess who you (Nehemiah 1:6b-7)
 - 1 John 1:9
 - Stop living for what you deserve, start living by God's undeserved grace.
3. Nehemiah teaches us to call on God's promises (Nehemiah 1:8-9)
4. Nehemiah teaches us to ask God for specific help (Nehemiah 1:10-11)



Application

So what can I do this week?

- **Ask God if there were any loss, hurt, disappointment, pain that you have not grieved over. Ask God help you to express your hurt to him.**
- **Do a limited fast - one meal or turning off your phone for a day or one hour. And use that time to focus your attention on God.**
- **Pray through these four parts of Nehemiah's prayer sometime this week.**

THE END

A wide-angle photograph of a beach at dusk. The sky is a deep, dark blue, and the ocean is visible in the distance. The foreground is a sandy beach with some sparse, dry vegetation. In the center of the frame, the words "THE END" are written in large, white, block letters. The letters are illuminated from below, casting a bright, greenish-yellow glow on the sand.