



EZRA'S

prayer

A BLUEPRINT
FOR SEEKING
GOD'S HELP



"Now on the twenty-fourth day of this month the people of Israel were assembled with fasting and in sackcloth, and with earth on their heads.... And they stood up in their place and read from the Book of the Law of the Lord their God for a quarter of the day; for another quarter of it they made confession and worshiped the Lord their God.... 'Stand up and bless the Lord your God from everlasting to everlasting. Blessed be Your glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise.'"

Nehemiah 9:1-5



Nehemiah 9 contains the longest recorded prayer in the Bible, a heartfelt and detailed plea led by Ezra during a solemn assembly of the Israelites. This prayer offers a powerful model for seeking God's help, drawing on themes of worship, confession, thanksgiving, and petition. As we explore this prayer, we discover a blueprint for turning to God in times of need.

1. Begin with Worship and Acknowledgment of God's Sovereignty

Ezra's prayer opens with a declaration of who God is: "You are the Lord, You alone. You have made Heaven, the Heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them; and You preserve all of them; and the host of Heaven worships You." (Nehemiah 9:6)

When seeking God's help, we must first acknowledge His greatness, power, and authority. Recognizing Him as the Creator and Sustainer of all things reminds us of His ability to intervene in our circumstances. This posture of worship sets the tone for humble dependence.

2. Recall God's Faithfulness in History

Ezra recounts God's mighty acts throughout Israel's history, from His covenant with Abraham to the miraculous deliverance from Egypt and the provision in the wilderness: "You saw the affliction of our fathers in Egypt and heard their cry at the Red Sea... By a pillar of cloud You led them in the day, and by a pillar of fire in the night to light for them the way in which they should go." (Nehemiah 9:9, 12)

Remembering God's faithfulness strengthens our faith. Just as He delivered Israel time and again, we can trust Him to work in our lives today. Take time to reflect on God's faithfulness in your own journey



3. Confess Sin with Honesty and Humility

Ezra's prayer does not shy away from acknowledging Israel's failures: "But they and our fathers acted presumptuously and stiffened their neck and did not obey Your commandments... Yet You are a God ready to forgive, gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and did not forsake them." (Nehemiah 9:16-17)

Confession and repentance is a vital step in seeking God's help. Admitting our sins clears the way for restoration. Ezra's prayer models how to approach God with honesty about our shortcomings while relying on His grace and mercy.

4. Express Gratitude for God's Goodness

Even amid their distress, the Israelites acknowledge God's abundant provision: "You gave Your good Spirit to instruct them and did not withhold Your manna from their mouth and gave them water for their thirst. Forty years You sustained them in the wilderness, and they lacked nothing." (Nehemiah 9:20-21) And they lacked NOTHING! I love that part!

Gratitude shifts our focus from despair to hope. By recalling God's goodness, and thanking Him for His blessings, we affirm our trust in His continued care.





5. Recognize God's Mercy and Patience

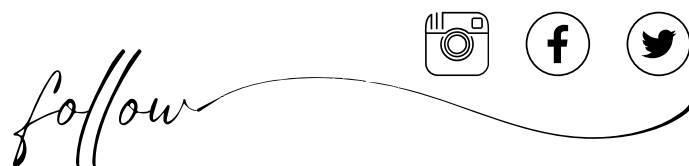
Throughout the prayer, Ezra highlights God's mercy despite Israel's repeated rebellion: "Nevertheless, in Your great mercies You did not make an end of them or forsake them, for You are a gracious and merciful God." (Nehemiah 9:31)

When we approach God, we must trust in His mercy. His patience and steadfast love assure us that He hears our prayers and desires to restore us.

6. Petition God for Deliverance

Ezra's prayer concludes with a heartfelt plea for help: "Behold, we are slaves this day; in the land that You gave to our fathers to enjoy its fruit and its good gifts, behold, we are slaves... and we are in great distress." (Nehemiah 9:36-37)

After worship, confession, and thanksgiving, we bring our requests to God. Ezra's prayer teaches us to present our needs honestly, acknowledging our dependence on Him.





So, how do we apply the blueprint of this prayer in Nehemiah 9 to our daily lives? Ezra's prayer is more than a historical account; it's a timeless guide for seeking God's help.

Here's how we can apply its principles:

- **Start with Praise:** Begin your prayers by focusing on God's character and sovereignty.
- **Reflect on God's Faithfulness:** Recall specific ways He has worked in your life.
- **Confess Your Sins:** Approach God with humility, admitting where you've fallen short.
- **Offer Thanks:** Cultivate a heart of gratitude for God's provision and blessings.
- **Embrace His Mercy:** Trust in God's grace and His desire to forgive and restore.
- **Ask Boldly:** Present your requests with faith, knowing that God hears and responds.



Nehemiah 9 reminds us that God is not only sovereign and holy but also merciful and loving. No matter how far we've strayed, He invites us to return to Him with honest, heartfelt prayers. Let this prayer inspire you to seek God's help, trusting in His faithfulness to guide and deliver you.

How can the pattern of worship, confession, thanksgiving, and petition, in Nehemiah 9, inspire a deeper transformation in how you approach prayer and seek God's help in your own life?



We are quick to thank God for beautiful things, like roses, chocolate cake, and the life that makes sense. But what about the things that aren't so beautiful and don't make much sense? What about the thorns, bitter things, and our brokenness? *The Heart That Heals* is a book I wrote for you, for your mom, your sisters, the girls in your small group or Bible study, and the women you work with every day. Basically, I wrote this book for every one of us, because we all need to be reminded, from time to time, of the promises of God.

If you and I were Pen Pals, *The Heart That Heals* is the letter I would write to you if you'd lost a child, a husband, a best friend, or a sister. It's the kind of letter I would seal with a heart-shaped sticker that says, "God Loves You," you know, that kind of sticker you used to get in Sunday school. You'd read my letter and you'd know, yes, you would know, He truly does love me!

I love coffee, dark chocolate, and Jesus. It's just not necessarily in that order. But if I'm completely honest with you friend, some days it is in that order, and that's a big problem! One of the things I love about *The Heart That Heals* is that it reminds me of my priorities and that I'm not the one in control here. Then it gently guides me back to the path where the One Who is in control is patiently waiting. Except He's not just waiting. He's been pursuing me, calling my name, beckoning me back to Him the whole time.

I pray *The Heart That Heals* meets you in the quiet places of your heart—especially that place where you struggle to see God at work. I'm inviting you to explore those places with me and be changed.

"The Heart That Heals is like a friend who comes alongside you to walk a long journey. There are moments on the path when your friend lets you cry, or even cries along with you because the terrain is tough. There are times when your friend grabs your hand and lifts you up because you've tripped over a tree root you didn't see. Then there are glimpses of remembered joy when your friend says something funny-and you laugh-and the path seems brighter. And, somewhere along the way, you realize she gets it. She understands. She knows because she's walked this path before. Thank you for providing a resource that not only offers healing hope but also a sense of friendship for the journey." —Stephanie

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I'll be honest with you, friend, I've tried to read the Bible cover to cover in a year many times before and never succeeded. But last year, I did it and the most amazing thing happened!

As I was reading through God's Word, I was also writing Sweeter Than Honey. The Scripture reading on the final day of my writing schedule was the last two chapters of Revelation. That's where I read that God said *"It is done"* (21:6)! When I read that, it was like a light went on in my head, and, for the first time, I realized the full scope of God's redemptive plan for mankind! I saw the big picture that day!

- At the beginning of the Bible, following Creation in Genesis, God says, *"It is good"* (1:31). sadly, we know that mankind messed that up big time.
- In the book of John, we read as Jesus hung on that cross for you and me, where He says *"It is finished"* (19:30). It's the pivotal point of God's redemptive plan and all of history.
- Then, finally, in Revelation, we read, *"It is done"* (21:6)! Notice the exclamation mark that follows those powerful words.

IT IS GOOD. IT IS FINISHED. IT IS DONE!

This has been such a great season of life to be reminded of these truths!

Sweeter Than Honey is a 365-day devotional journey centered on Psalm 119:103. *"How sweet are Your Words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!"* It's a book written to help you find peace in the chaos and strength for your weakest moments as it encourages you in your daily walk with God. These 365 devotions will lead you gently through God's Word in chronological order of book authorship, and when you read the accompanying passage for each day you will have read through the entire Bible!

"You'll find encouragement on every page of this book—encouragement to seek God above all else. The strong spiritual emphasis will challenge you to turn to God for daily direction and experience His presence in a whole new and intentional way. Sweeter Than Honey will become more to you than just another daily devotional, it will become a keepsake as you record prayers and participate in thought-provoking, practical exercises that touch every aspect of your life and draw you closer to our Creator." —Prologue

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In Old Testament times, a name was an identification and an identity. Many times, a special meaning was attached to a name. Similarly, the names of God reveal His identity, and they have special meanings. Throughout Scripture, God reveals Himself to us. Much of the Old Testament is where He reveals Himself through His names. As we study these 16 names of God we better understand Who He is. The meanings of His names uncover the central personality and nature of the One Who is our Strong Tower. Let's run to that Strong Tower of the names of God together!

Through this study, you will:

- See His character unfold in ways you've never seen before.
- Recognize how closely related His names are to His character.
- Become even more personally committed to following Him.
- Understand His steadfast love toward you and who you are in Him.

These 16 names of God are presented in the order that they are revealed to us in God's Word—the Bible. As we study these 16 names, we will see His character and nature unfold and build on the name before it. You will find yourself immediately drawn to Him as you discover He is not only your Creator. He is also your Provider. He is your Healer and your place of peace. He is your Protector, Guide, and constant Companion. Through the extravagant gift of Himself, we know Proverbs 18:10 to be true. *"The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous run into it and are safe."*

God knows us by our name (Isaiah 43:1). Shouldn't we also know Him by His?

"Longing for a deeper understanding of God's character and a richer relationship with your Savior? Sixteen Names of God offers bite-sized nuggets of insight into God's powerful, personal, and transformative names—perfect for a daily devotional read to help you meditate on a different name of God each day. Patsy's warm and inviting style of writing will make you feel like you're discussing the God you love with a friend in a cozy café. So, grab this book and a cup of coffee, and prepare to feel awe, reverence, love, and gratitude for the character of our awesome God!" —Cami

Available at Amazon [Hardback | Paperback | Kindle | Audiobook]





Come & Dwell: Biblically-Based Micro Devotions and Prayers for Your Busy Days

In the whirlwind of daily life, it's easy to feel overwhelmed and disconnected from God. Yet, His unchanging invitation remains: Come & Dwell. This beautifully written devotional meets you right where you are, offering a simple way to connect with God in the busyness of life.

Inside Come & Dwell, you'll find:

- Scriptures to Anchor Your Day: Start each day with a verse that speaks directly to your heart.
- Micro Devotions to Reflect On: Short but impactful truths to inspire, encourage, and ground your faith.
- Prayers to Guide Your Moments: Simple, heartfelt prayers to invite God's presence into your everyday.

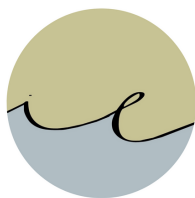
Whether you're enjoying your morning coffee, rushing to your next appointment, or pausing in a quiet moment, Come & Dwell is your companion for creating daily sacred rhythms.

Let God's Word transform your heart, His love meet your deepest needs, and His presence become your dwelling place. Say "yes" to the invitation today—Come & Dwell.

"This devotional is exactly the thing I needed to keep me on track in the busyness of life. As I study God's Word, I can't help but come to the conclusion that there should be a morning, noon, and evening focus on God's Word. Not just because I have to, but an intentional surrender that is a result of reading/hearing and praying His Word. I'm still working on forming this habit, and this book has helped with my evenings. What a great way to end my day. I like the simplicity and consistency of the format of this book. It begins with a scripture passage written out so I can easily read and pray through it, personalizing the passage. Then, there is a short paragraph of spiritual encouragement. It then ends with a prayer that I can pray. Very well written and Spirit-filled." —Julie

Available at Amazon [Paperback]





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We're building a worldwide online community of encouragers encouraging others in the faith of Jesus Christ. So, grab a cup of coffee and Join the movement!



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MISSION: Equipping you to be an encourager.

VERSE: *“Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.”* (1 Thessalonians 5:11)

VISION: To give followers the opportunity to daily encourage others in the faith and be the light in their little corner of the world.

PURPOSE: Our greatest purpose is to know Jesus Christ and to make Him known. It's really just that simple. We do that by presenting the Gospel of Jesus Christ in such a way that it turns non-Christians into converts, converts into disciples, and disciples into mature, fruitful leaders, who will, in turn, go into the world and reach others for Him.