

## **February Teaching Theme:** The Book of Nehemiah

讲员 Speaker: Pastor Peter Linghui Tian / Dr. Victor P. Hamilton

题目 Topic: Confession

经文 Scripture: Nehemiah 9

**Monthly Theme:** As we enter a new year, we will spend some time walking through the book of Nehemiah over the next nine weeks. Although Nehemiah is its own book in our English Bibles, the whole book is actually Ezra-Nehemiah together. So as we approach Nehemiah, we have to keep in mind that we are coming into the story 3/4th of the way through. If we go back to the beginning of the story in Ezra, we are told that God moved King Cyrus' heart to let the Israelites return to their land to fulfill the prophecy spoken by Jeremiah (Ezra 1). The hope that exile will not be forever should trigger the reader to pick up all the other prophetic hopes of return, including hope for the Messianic King, God's presence in the Temple, and God's Kingdom to be established. We must keep these hopes in mind as we read to the story to properly understand both the ups and downs. Most characters in the Biblical narrative, including Nehemiah, are deeply flawed individuals who have a mix of successes and failures - just like you and me. And this mix of success and failure we will keep confronting as we move through the story of Nehemiah. Let's see what we can learn from Nehemiah's story.

### 二月 **February:** 尼希米記 **Nehemiah**

February 6th - 尼希米記: 與神立約 The Covenant (尼希米記七至八章 Nehemiah 7-8)

February 13th - 尼希米記: 認承罪孽 The Confession (尼希米記九章 Nehemiah 9)

February 20th - 尼希米記: 落成典禮 The Dedication (尼希米記十至十二章 Nehemiah 10-12)

February 27th - 尼希米記: 功敗垂成 The Failure (尼希米記十三章 Nehemiah 13) (聖容主日 Transfiguration Sunday)

### **Resources:**

[Sermon Video](#) (Pastor Tian)

[Sermon Slides](#) (Pastor Tian)

[Sermon Video](#) (Dr. Hamilton)

[Sermon Slides](#) (Dr. Hamilton)

[Overview: Ezra-Nehemiah \(Bible Project\)](#) [English]

[Overview: Ezra-Nehemiah \(Bible Project\)](#) [Mandarin]

\* If your group hasn't watched the overview video yet, please do so.\*

### **Discussion Questions** (Pastor William R. Horne / Pastor Peter Linghui Tian):

*Pastor Will*

- (1) Read Nehemiah 9 together. What observations do you make, and what stands out to you? How would you summarize the passage? As you read, take note of all that is contained in their prayer of confession.
- (2) **Self Confession:** Today, we are going to put confession into practice. In all of these prayers of confession, the prayer confesses their own sin. "One of the main works of Satan in the life of the believer is to, as much as possible, make us blind to our own sins

but very much aware of others' sins." Let's spend a few minutes in individual prayer and reflection, confessing our own sins.

- (3) **Community Confession:** Second, you will notice in prayers of confession, is they are not just individual but prayers for "me and my people." Spend some time in a small group discussing what we need to confess as a community and then spend some time in prayer, confessing the sins of our community.
- (4) **Ancestor Confession:** As you read Nehemiah 9, you will also notice that the prayer confesses the sins of their forefathers - the sins of those generations before them. Discuss as a group what sins we need to confess on behalf of our forefathers/mothers and then pray a prayer of confession. (See [Slide 16](#) of Dr. Hamilton's slides for a breakdown of Neh 9 prayer).
- (5) **Christ Confession:** In the New Testament, we are called to "confess (or acknowledge) Christ" - that is to proclaim and believe the same things about Jesus that he said about himself. What things does Jesus say about himself, that we should be "confessing"?

#### *Pastor Tian*

- (1) 通过尼9：1-5节，当时以色列人花多长时间读经，又花多长时间在上帝面前祷告？从中你学到了什么？Through Nehemiah 9:1-5, how long did the Israelites spend reading the Bible and praying before God? What did you learn from it?
- (2) 请分享过去生活中，上帝在你生命中恩典的记号（感恩的事）。Please share the signs of God's grace in your life in your past life (things of gratitude).
- (3) 回顾以往，对比现在，你对上帝的属性有哪此不同的认识？Looking back on the past, compared to the present, what is the difference in your understanding of the attributes of God?

#### **Important Notes** (Pastor William R. Horne):

**Notes on Q1:** As you read through this chapter, make sure you recall the context from both the [Monthly Theme](#) section and the [Bible Project video](#). Context is key to understanding the movements of the story.