**Nehemiah 1:1-11**

1The words of Nehemiah son of Hacaliah: In the month of Kislev

in the twentieth year, while I was in the citadel of Susa,

2Hanani, one of my brothers, came from Judah with some of the

other men, and I questioned them about the Jewish remnant that

survived the exile, and also about Jerusalem.

3They said to me, “Those who survived the exile and are back

in the province are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of

Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been burned with fire.”

4When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days

I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven.

5Then I said: “O Lord, God of heaven, the great and awesome God,

who keeps his covenant of love with those who love him and obey

his commands,

6let your ear be attentive and your eyes open to hear the prayer

your servant is praying before you day and night for your servants,

the people of Israel. I confess the sins we Israelites, including

myself and my father’s house, have committed against you.

7We have acted very wickedly toward you. We have not obeyed the

commands, decrees and laws you gave your servant Moses.

8“Remember the instruction you gave your servant Moses, saying,

‘If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the nations,

9but if you return to me and obey my commands,

then even if your exiled people are at the farthest horizon,

I will gather them from there and bring them to the place

I have chosen as a dwelling for my Name.’

10“They are your servants and your people,

whom you redeemed by your great strength and your mighty hand.

11O Lord, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of this your servant

and to the prayer of your servants who delight in revering your name.

Give your servant success today by granting him favor

in the presence of this man.”

I was cupbearer to the king.