

FINDING YOUR VOICE

July 16, 2017 Nehemiah 1-2 by Bob Branch
Thinking Biblically About Culture

“Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves” **Prov. 31:8**

BIG IDEA: God is challenging us, calling us to Find Our Voice.

“In the month of Kislev in the twentieth year, while I was in the citadel of Susa, ² Hanani, one of my brothers, came from Judah with some other men, and I questioned them about the Jewish remnant that had survived the exile, and also about Jerusalem.

³ They 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.”

⁴ When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven.” **Nehemiah 1:1-4** (2 Cor. 7:11)

1. Finding your voice starts with FINDING GOD’S HEART.

Perhaps our biggest problem is APATHY.

2. Finding our voice IN PRAYER TO GOD is the beginning of change.

⁵ Then I said: “Lord, the God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with those who love him and keep his commandments, ⁶ let 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 family, have committed against you....

¹⁰ “They are your servants and your people, whom you redeemed by your great strength and your mighty hand. ¹¹ 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. **Neh. 1:5–11**

“...if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.” **2 Chronicles 7:13–14**

“... keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you.” **Luke 11:9–10 NLT**

^{2:1} In the month of Nisan in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was brought for him, I took the wine and gave it to the king. I had not been sad in his presence before, ² so the king asked me, “Why does your face look so sad when you are not ill? This can be nothing but sadness of heart.”

I was very much afraid, ³ but I said to the king, “May the king live forever! Why should my face not look sad when the city where my ancestors are buried lies in ruins, and its gates have been destroyed by fire?”

⁴ The king said to me, “What is it you want?”

Then I prayed to the God of heaven, ⁵ and I answered the king, “If it pleases the king and if your servant has found favor in his sight, let him send me to the city in Judah where my ancestors are buried so that I can rebuild it.” **Nehemiah 2:1–5**

3. As we pray, God will begin to give us a voice TO SPEAK INTO AREAS that need change. To speak for him.

Forging this new ground for something bigger than ourselves is almost never easy.