



“Running On Empty”

1. READ

Scripture: Nehemiah 1:4 – 11 New King James Version

So it was, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned for many days; I was fasting and praying before the God of heaven.

5 And I said: “I pray, Lord God of heaven, O great and awesome God, You who keep Your covenant and mercy with those who love You and observe Your commandments, 6 please let Your ear be attentive and Your eyes open, that You may hear the prayer of Your servant which I pray before You now, day and night, for the children of Israel Your servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel which we have sinned against You. Both my father’s house and I have sinned. 7 We have acted very corruptly against You, and have not kept the commandments, the statutes, nor the ordinances which You commanded Your servant Moses. 8 Remember, I pray, the word that You commanded Your servant Moses, saying, ‘If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the nations; 9 but if you return to Me, and keep My commandments and do them, though some of you were cast out to the farthest part of the heavens, yet I will gather them from there, and bring them to the place which I have chosen as a dwelling for My name.’

10 Now these are Your servants and Your people, whom You have redeemed by Your great power, and by Your strong hand. 11 O Lord, I pray, please let Your ear be attentive to the prayer of Your servant, and to the prayer of Your servants who desire to fear Your name; and let Your servant prosper this day, I pray, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man.”

For I was the king’s cupbearer.



Suggested Chapters to Study This Week: Nehemiah 4 and Isaiah 6

REFLECT



[\[Click the image\]](#)

As we begin the new year, Pastor Watley is taking us through a new sermon series entitled “Running On Empty”. Pastor explains that we have been through a lot in the last 20 months and for many of us it feels like we are running on empty. Pastor is encouraging us that even though it feels like we are running on empty, God has given us more in the tank to run on. Pastor shares a story from his childhood where his grandfather had a van with two gas tanks and when one ran out, he would select a button to begin to use the other tank. The Pastor also quotes a few people to further explain being on empty:

Dale Carnegie says “Our fatigue is often caused not by work, but by worry, frustration, and resentment.”

Vince Lombardi quotes, “Fatigue makes cowards of us all.”



Bobby Womack quotes “Been down so long, getting up didn’t cross my mind.”

While we have so much to be fatigued about, we also have so much to be thankful to God for as well. Pastor Watley reminds us of the second tank and the fact that God has equipped us with more than we realize. Pastor quotes the old Hymn “There is a Balm in Gilead” where it says “Sometimes I feel discouraged and think my works are in vain, but then the Holy Spirit revives my soul again.” This is where Pastor says we find Nehemiah in our scripture and he is revived by shifting his focus to God.

Pastor Watley tells us about the path that Nehemiah takes to continue to run even though he feels like he is running on empty. Nehemiah goes through this process of prayer that we should follow:

- Nehemiah laments to the Lord. Lament is a passionate expression of grief or sorrow. (Verse 4)
- Nehemiah moves from lament to invocation where he entreats God to hear his words. (Verse 5)
- After the invocation, Nehemiah moves to confession where he acknowledges the sins of his people against God. (Verses 6 and 7)
- This leads Nehemiah to his promise of Redemption for his people. (Verses 8-10)
- After his prayer of redemption, Nehemiah moves to a prayer of petition where he now asks God on behalf of his people.

Pastor is encouraging us to use this path and process of prayer to move forward in this season when it seems like we are running on empty. The Pastor also provides us with reminders of others who thought they were at their end right before God steps in.

- Abram with Isaac (Genesis 22)
- Elijah (1 Kings 17 - 2 Kings 2)
- Samson (Judges 16)
- Paul (2 Corinthians 12)
- And of course, Jesus (Matthew 26)

We have to trust that while what we’re going through is a lot, it is never too much for God and that God has given us an extra tank to use.



1. RESPOND

Introspective Questions

- ï When was the last time you felt as if you were running on empty?
- ï How do you handle this empty feeling and what can you do to be revived?

Discussion Questions

- ï What do you think Nehemiah really wanted to do as he felt empty?
- ï How do you think Nehemiah felt after he heard for the Lord ?

