

Some historical background:

609-539 BC: Jeremiah 25:11 “these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years” (domination)
 605-536 BC: Jeremiah 29:10 “When 70 years are completed for Babylon, I will bring you back to this place.” (captivity in Babylon)
 586-516 BC: Zechariah 1:16 “I have returned to Jerusalem with mercy, my house shall be in it.” (God’s anger with Israel’s sin)

Fulfillment:

538-536 BC: About 50,000 Jews leave Babylon, return to Jerusalem, and rebuild the altar. Fulfilling the Jeremiah 25 and Jeremiah 29 prophecies.

520 BC: Haggai and Zechariah preach that the Jews need to rebuild the temple and resume work.

516 BC: The temple is completed, fulfilling the Zechariah 1 prophecy.

458 BC: Ezra is allowed by Artaxerxes I to return to Jerusalem to re-establish proper worship in the temple. In response, the people attempt to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, but are stopped by hostile neighbors.

reign	Greek	Hebrew	Old Persian
539-530	Kyros (Cyrus)	Koresh	Kurus (KH-R-SH)
530-522	Cambyses		Kambujiya (KH-M-B)
522-486	Darius I	Daryavesh (D-R-SH)	Darayavahus (D-R-S)
486-465	Xerxes I	Achashverosh (CH-SH-R-SH) Ahasuerus	Khshayarsha (KH-SH-R-SH)
465-424	Artaxerxes I	Artachshasta (RT-CH-SH-SH-T)	Artakhshayarsha (R-T-KH-SH-R-SH)
480-424	Amestris	Esther (S-T-R)	(M-S-T-R)

⁶And in the reign of Ahasuerus, in the beginning of his reign, they wrote an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem.

⁷In the days of Artaxerxes, Bishlam and Mithredath and Tabeel and the rest of their associates wrote to Artaxerxes king of Persia. The letter was written in Aramaic and translated. ⁸Rehum the commander and Shimshai the scribe wrote a letter against Jerusalem to Artaxerxes the king – Ezra 4:6-8

“To Artaxerxes the king: Your servants, the men of the province Beyond the River, send greeting. And now ¹²be it known to the king that the Jews who came up from you to us have gone to Jerusalem. They are rebuilding that rebellious and wicked city. They are finishing the walls and repairing the foundations. ¹³Now be it known to the king that if this city is rebuilt and the walls finished, they will not pay tribute, custom, or toll, and the royal revenue will be impaired. Ezra 4:11-13

¹⁷The king sent an answer: “To Rehum the commander and Shimshai the scribe and the rest of their associates who live in Samaria and in the rest of the province Beyond the River, greeting. And now ¹⁸the letter that you sent to us has been plainly read before me. ¹⁹And I made a decree, and search has been made, and it has been found that this city from of old has risen against kings, and that rebellion and sedition have been made in it. ²⁰And mighty kings have been over Jerusalem, who ruled over the whole province Beyond the River, to whom tribute, custom, and toll were paid.

²¹Therefore make a decree that these men be made to cease, and that this city not be rebuilt, until a

decree is made by me. ²²And take care not to be slack in this matter. Why should damage grow to the hurt of the king?"

²³Then, when the copy of King Artaxerxes' letter was read before Rehum and Shimshai the scribe and their associates, they went in haste to the Jews at Jerusalem and by force and power made them cease. ²⁴Then the work on the house of God that is in Jerusalem stopped - Ezra 4:17-24

445 or 444 BC: (20th year of Artaxerxes I) Nehemiah hears from Hanani about Jerusalem still being in ruins and therefore ridiculed by neighbors.

Nehemiah fasts and prays for days before asking God for help. What is his basic problem?

What help does Nehemiah need from God?

How does understanding God's promise direct his approach to God in his prayer?

Preparation for praying (v4)

Affirming God's character; claiming His promise to listen (v5-6)

Confessing Israel's and his own sin (v6-7)

Recalling God's promise to forgive and redeem His people (8-11)

Making his request (v11)

What is his request for God to do?

For Israel? (v11)

For Nehemiah? (v11)

Why is it important to know that he is the wine bearer for the king?

Application:

1. What is the biggest problem you are facing now?
2. Are there any promises in scripture that relate to your problem?
3. How would these promises direct your prayers about it?
4. How should your recognition of your part in causing the problem direct your prayers?