

LEARNING TO LAMENT

Nehemiah 1:4b-11

By Josh McNall

Introduction: How do you receive bad news? Based on our unique stories and personalities, we process grief and disappointment differently. That is as it should be. There is no script for how to process pain.

Yet as we read Scripture, we note the marked Hebrew tendency to engage in sustained lament. Biblical lament is both louder and longer than feels normal to some modern, Western Christians. Today we'll learn why Christians must reclaim this spiritual discipline even as we work and hope for transformation and renewal.

What must we learn from Nehemiah's lament over Jerusalem?

1. **“I sat and wept. For some days I mourned ...”**

2. **“I fasted and prayed . . .”**

3. “I confess[ed] the sins we had committed.”

4. “I called on God to remember his covenant-promises.”

Big Idea: In Nehemiah, we see that biblical lament is not the opposite of hope and faithful action—it is their essential pre-requisite.