



**The Mar Thoma Church  
Diocese of North America & Europe  
Christian Education Forum**

## Lenten Meditations

### RENEWAL – PARTICIPATE WITH GOD

**Nehemiah 1:1-11**

As the vicar of a very small parish in Chavara in the southern part of India we had the responsibility of rebuilding the walls of the entire church compound. I still remember how hard it was for our church to explore human and financial resources in the small parish to rebuild the broken walls surrounding the church compound. Here in the book of Nehemiah we observe Nehemiah as one of the most powerful persons who transformed an entire community and its resources towards a vision. But the highlight of this vision is not just material prosperity or achievement of a community.

The Israelites had just returned from exile and they were shattered in many ways. Nehemiah earnestly prayed to God to renew the Israelites who had turned away from God and whose communication with God had broken. He wanted his people to participate in God's plan for them. So he prayed for renewal for his people. Nehemiah participates with God to transform the sinful and broken community to be renewed in the Lord.

God calls us to be renewed in Him in the midst of our life experiences. Even though we may be far away from God due to our sinful past life there is still hope for renewal. We experience spiritual renewal when we come closer to the Lord and participate in his Plans for us and our community.

***Prayer:** Lord we come to your presence as we are sinners and we seek spiritual renewal within us. Like Nehemiah. Help us to seek your vision for us and our community and to actively participate in your vision for us. Amen.*

Rev. Benu John, Baltimore

“But 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.”- Nehemiah 1:09