

Reflection Questions

1. Reflect on your prayer life. Is prayer a first response or last resort in your life? Be honest.
2. Identify a burden, problem, or goal you have been working to fix, address, or reach. Are you building that work on a foundation of prayer or a teeter-totter?
3. What do you believe about the nature and character of God? How does that shape your prayer life (or lack thereof)?

Prayer for Those Searching for Truth:

Lord Jesus, you claim to be the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Grant that I might be undaunted by the cost of following you as I consider the reasons for doing so. If what you claim is true, please guide me, teach me, and open me to the reality of who you are. Give me an understanding of you that is coherent and convincing, and that leads to the life you promise. Amen.

Prayer of Belief:

Lord Jesus Christ, I admit that I am weaker and more sinful than I ever dared admit, but through you I am more loved and accepted than I ever dared hope. I thank you for paying my debt on the cross, taking what I deserved in order to offer me complete forgiveness. Knowing that you have been raised from the dead, I turn from my sins and receive you as my Savior and Lord. Amen.



The Prayer Foundation
Nehemiah 2:1-8
October 18, 2015

Recap

Last week we identified three movements in the development of Nehemiah's calling to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem:

1. See a need that moves you.
2. Grieve the reality of the need.
3. Pray the need is met through you.

The chapter ends with Nehemiah praying, "grant me favor in the presence of that man." That man was King Artaxerxes. Nehemiah served as his cupbearer.

We learned in Ezra 4 that King Artaxerxes had stopped, by force, the rebuilding efforts that had begun 13 yrs. prior.

Now, Nehemiah finds himself in a position of having to ask the same king who halted the rebuilding for permission to start the rebuilding again.

The first thing he does is pray.

The Timing

The time between when Nehemiah hears the news and starts praying to the time he has his conversation with the king is four months (month of Kislev - month of Nisan).

That may sound like a long time, or that may sound like a short time. The point is not so much the timeframe as much as this wasn't a one-time prayer.

The Meeting

King Artaxerxes asks Nehemiah why he is sad. Nehemiah tells him about the distress of the people in Jerusalem. The king responds:

The king said to me, "What is it that you want?"
-Nehemiah 2:4a (NIV)

Nehemiah makes his requests:

- Go to Jerusalem to rebuild the wall.
- Be granted safe travel.
- Material for the job.

Nehemiah was prepared.
King Artaxerxes generously granted his requests.
God is given the credit (2:8b)

NOTES:

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Grant me favor in the presence of that man - Neh. 1:11b

Because the gracious hand of my God was on me, the king granted my requests. -Neh. 2:8b

The prayer of chapter one is answered in chapter two!



Prayer is the foundation for the fulfillment of your calling.

P R A Y E R

Prayer is not a substitute for action, it is an action for which there is no substitute.

NOTES:

Prayer

O Lord, mercifully receive the prayers of your people who call upon you, and grant that they may know and understand what things they ought to do, and also may have grace and power faithfully to accomplish them; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen. (Source: Book of Common Prayer, Proper 10)