

A Call to Remember
2023 WOC Summer Study
Donna Evans

Key verse: "Remember me with favor, O my God." Nehemiah 13:31

- I. Prayer Overview
 - a. What is prayer & why is it important?
 - b. Types of prayer
 - i. Ejaculatory/Dart
 - ii. Logistical
 - iii. Tactical
 - iv. Imprecatory
 - v. Strategic

- II. Nehemiah's Priority of Prayer (Nehemiah 1)
 - a. Big Problem
 - b. Big Project
 - c. Big God
 - i. God of _____
 - ii. God of _____
 - iii. God of _____
 - iv. _____ God
 - d. Big worldview
 - e. Big Covenant
 - f. Big Prayer

- III. Nehemiah's Pattern & Practice of Prayer
 - a. Before the king 2:4
 - i. Choosing faith over fear
 - ii. Knowing what to ask for
 - b. Faced with enemies & opposition
 - i. External (Neh. 4:4-5, Neh. 6:14)
 - ii. Internal (Neh. 5)
 - c. Practical needs:
 - i. Protecting the workers and the wall (Neh. 4:9)
 - ii. Asking for strength – Neh. 6:9
 - d. Levites – Don't waste our suffering (Neh.9:32)
 - e. A call to remember – Neh. 1:8, 5:19, 13:14,22, 29, 31

- IV. Biblical Paradigm of Prayer
 - a. Desperate _____ God
 - b. Dependent _____ God
 - c. Delivered _____ God
 - d. Delighted _____ God

- V. Nehemiah Prayers' Product
 - a. Wall is rebuilt in 52 days (6:15)
 - b. Community, "reciprocal rootedness," is built (Neh.3)
 - c. Joy of obedience (8)
 - d. Corporate worship is reestablished (9)
 - e. Covenant renewed (10)
 - f. City re-populated (11)
 - g. God is glorified (6:16)

- VI. Practical Strategies
 - a. Pray Scripture. Take God at His Word and ask him to do as he has promised!
(2 Samuel 7:25)
 - b. Don't just study about prayer; pray!
 - c. Keep a record of answered prayer; it encourages us to pray more!

- VII. Points us to the Greater Nehemiah
 - a. Philippians 2:3-11
 - b. John 17:20-24
 - c. Hebrews 4:14-16
 - d. A final question

Nehemiah & Prayer

A Call to Remember

Selected Passages

WOC Summer Study 2023

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Prayer

- What is it and why is it important?
- A means to stay even tempered, cool headed and strong spirited in the middle of fear, chaos, and crisis. (Robert J.Morgan)
- Conversation with God; Divine discourse
- Begins with the recognition of our need
- Humility & helplessness
- Desperate and dependent
- Opportunity to better know God

Types of Prayer

- Ejaculatory- quick dart prayers
- Logistical – practical needs
- Tactical – meaningful, but not ultimate
- Imprecatory- curses or calamity on enemies
- Strategic- ultimate purposes
 - Nehemiah 1:5 (your covenant)
 - Nehemiah 1:6 (your people)
 - Nehemiah 1:8 (your word)

Imprecatory Prayers

- Invoking God's wrath on wicked
- Concern for God's reputation
- Concern for just cause
- Exhibits righteous indignation sin
- Nehemiah prays, doesn't prescribe
- Leaves result to God
- Psalm 35, 58, 69, 83, 109

Meet Nehemiah

- Jewish exile living in Persia, 445 BC
- Cupbearer to King Artaxerxes
- “the Lord comforts”
- Cupbearer, contractor, Governor
- Man of prayer/encouragement
- Personal concern for corporate welfare
- Living in exile, he never forgets who he is or Whom he serves

Nehemiah 1 Recap

- Big Problem
- Big Project
- Big God
 - God of heaven
 - God of covenant
 - God of Israel (corporate)
 - Nehemiah's God (personal)
- Big Worldview
- Big Prayer

Big Problem

- Jerusalem walls are in ruins
- 150 years of defeat
- Jerusalem-unprotected & unpopulated
- Discouraged citizens
- Hostile enemies & opposition
- God is dishonored
- Seemingly impossible task

Big Project: The Wall

- 1.5- 2.5 miles around city
- 3-4 feet thick; 15-20 feet high
- 9 gates access
- Protection for city
- Security for the inhabitants
- Biblically symbolic of salvation
 - (Isaiah 26:1, 60:18)
- God's glory/name/fame

Nehemiah's Big God

- LORD - YHWH, covenant/family name of God
- God of heaven
- Great & awesome God
- Covenant keeper
- Faithful Promise Maker/Promise Keeper

Big Worldview

- King Artaxerxes— “this man” 1:11
- God – God of heaven, the true King
- Nehemiah – servant to both kings
- Big bold requests
- Views his circumstances through his God lens remembering God’s character & covenant faithfulness

Big Prayer

- Reaches back to the God's covenant
- Moses – Deuteronomy 28
- Solomon – 1 Kings 8
- See me; hear me
- Forgive us – personal & corporate
- Remember your promise – remnant return
- Grant me favor

Pattern & Practice of Prayer

Nehemiah Prayers

- Nehemiah 1:5-11
- Nehemiah 2:4
- Nehemiah 4:4-5
- Nehemiah 4:9
- Nehemiah 5:19
- Nehemiah 6:9, 14
- Nehemiah 13:14, 22, 29, 31

Pattern & Practice of Prayer

- Before the king 2:4
 - Choosing faith over fear
 - Knowing what to ask for
- Faced with enemies & opposition
 - External
 - Internal

Fear

- Usually the first thing we do
- Paralyzes us
- Focuses on the problem
- Opposite of faith
- Uses valuable resources
- Takeaway: We can choose faith, or we can choose fear, but we can't choose them both at the same time.

Overcoming Discouragement

- Fear
- Fatigue
- Frustration
- Loss of Focus
- Failure

Pattern & Practice of Prayer

- Practical needs
- Protecting the workers on the wall 4:9
- Asking for strength Neh. 6:9
- Levites' Don't waste our suffering 9:32
- A call to remember
 - Nehemiah 1:8, 5:19, 13:14,22, 29, 31

External Opposition Tactics

- Ridicule
- Resistance
- Rumor
- Repetition
- False reports
- Intimidation

Nehemiah's Response: Commitment

- Relies on God (4:4,5)
- Respected the opposition (4:9)
- Reinforced his weak points (4:13)
- Reassured the people (4:14)
- Refused to quit (4:15)
- Renewed the people's strength continually (4:16-23)

Opposition- The Enemy Within

- Hunger
- Debt
- Taxes
- Usury
- Selfish lack of compassion
- Disobedience from God's law

Prayer's Product

- Wall rebuilt in 52 days
- Repopulated Jerusalem
- Resettled the land
- Restored the people
- Renewed the covenant
- Joy of obedience
- Preserved a legacy
- Example to follow

Wall Dedication/Levites' Prayer

- Don't let all the hardship seem insignificant to you. Nehemiah 9:32
- Don't waste our suffering
- What kind of suffering?
- Government, religious, national, families, individuals
- All of it the last 300 years
- Then 400 years of silence

Biblical Prayer Paradigm

- Desperate *for* God
- Dependent *on* God
- Delivered *by* God
- Delighted *in* God

Practical Prayer Strategies

- Take God at His Word; Praying Scripture
- Don't just study about prayer; pray!
- Pray before we plan
- Keep a record of answered prayer; it encourages us to pray more!

Praying Scripture

- Every verse can be used to pray and:
- Rejoice
- Repent
- Remember
- Offer a request

Greater Nehemiah

Philippians 2:3-11

- Who left his palace
- Willing to put aside his comforts
- Obediently go to his people
- To serve and sacrifice
- Rescue us
- Provide the walls of our salvation
- By dying a sinner's death on the cross &
- Lives to intercede on our behalf
- Lives within us to change our hearts

Some Final Thoughts

- Israel comes out of exile but refuse relationship
- That's how the OT ends; story with no ending
- Anemic restoration; structure, no substance with everything lesser than
- What they/we really need is a Savior, one that picks up their hearts & brings their hearts to his
- What is the purpose of the return?
- God is still keeping his promises
- The OT calls us to the covenant love of God that isn't just promised but is actually accomplished.
- That's what makes the NT good news.

A Final Question

- How do we know God answered Nehemiah's prayer?