



THE POWER OF PRAYER

Nehemiah 1:1-11 NKJV

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INTRODUCTION

Nehemiah was a man of prayer.

Prayer - definition by Tony Evans

"Prayer is earth giving Heaven permission to intervene with her affairs.

It is our ability to communicate spiritually with God, supernaturally with the creator of the earth, the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords."

God has different transportation systems He uses:

- Birth to bring us to life
- Trials to shape and mold us into the image of His Son Jesus
- Death to transport us to Bema Seat or those that won't accept Jesus to the Great White Throne Judgement.

Prayer is also part of Gods' transportation system, from the supernatural to the natural.

The Holy Spirit lives in the life of the believer:

- He is always in constant communication with God the Father and God the Son
- The Holy Spirit is not absent from the Trinity but is an active Participant.
- He is God living and dwelling in us.

When we pray, are we believing God's Word and expecting results from praying His Word?

Speaking the Word of God pleases Him and we get powerful results.

† 2 Timothy 1:7 NKJV

Prayer is the most powerful and effective tool that the believer has at hand always.

It should consistently be a forethought and not an afterthought.

For some strange reason, we tend to go to God

- *after* we have tried everything else
- **THEN** we turn to Christ to get us out of our crisis
- We should without a doubt go to **God first** and foremost.

Charles Stanley "Handle With Prayer"

"The shortest distance between our problems and their solutions is the distance between our knees and the floor."

BACKGROUND

Nehemiah

- Born into captivity
- Never seen Jerusalem or splendor of Solomon's Temple
- Layman (not clergy or priest)
- Cupbearer, prominent position in King Artaxerxes court

Cupbearer

- Official of high rank in *royal courts*
- Duty was to serve the drinks at the royal table

Constant fear of plots and intrigues:

- *Cupbearer* must be thoroughly trustworthy
- He must guard against poison in the king's cup
- Sometimes required to swallow some of the drink before serving

His confidential relations with the king often gave him a position of great influence.

Position of cupbearer:

- Greatly valued
- Given only to a select few throughout history
- Qualifications for the job were not held lightly
- High esteem valued for their beauty
- Even more for their modesty, industriousness, and courage.

Cupbearer used only 4X in the Bible:

- Genesis 40, butler/cupbearer
- 1 Kings 10:5
- 2 Chronicles 9:4
- Nehemiah 1:11

Nehemiah - like Secret Service agent today, protection

King Xerxes

- Father of King Artaxerxes
- Husband of Queen Esther

Nehemiah means "Jehovah comforts"

Nehemiah cared about God and people of God

Captivity - Israelites did not honor the Land Sabbath.

- Every 7th year, land was supposed to rest
- Idolatry, apostasy (falling away from God)
- 490 years, Israelites did not allow land to rest (Leviticus 25:1-7; 26:34-35)
- Captivity - 70 years.
- Result: God used Nebuchadnezzar to discipline the Israelites

How do you respond to the things that hurt God?

1) **NEHEMIAH'S _____ FOR PRAYER** - Nehemiah 1:4 NKJV

By praying Nehemiah was preparing his heart, mind, and response to the task at hand.

a) **HIS HEART**

Genuine concern, wept, mourned, troubled till he went prayed.

Nehemiah took prayer's companion with him too: **PRAYER** "and" **FASTING**

(Esther 4:16; Isaiah 58:1-14; Joel 2:12; Mark 9:29; Matthew 4:2 NKJV)

b) **HIS MIND** - Leviticus 26:40-42, 26:46 NKJV

Contrary means **Hostility** (*Strong's Concordance Number: 7147*)

Nehemiah didn't know when the time was going to come

Nehemiah did know the time would come.

King Artaxerxes stepmother was Esther

c) **His Responses**

- King's response: Nehemiah 2:2 NKJV
 - Nehemiah's response: Nehemiah 2:5 NKJV
 - *Even though Nehemiah had prayed beforehand in the preparation phase, He still needed to have another talk with God before he responded to the king.*
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2) **NEHEMIAH _____ THROUGH PRAYER** - Nehemiah 2:8 NKJV

† Romans 8:28 NKJV Has God called you for a purpose? (Isa. 43:7; 1Cor. 10:31; Matt 28:19-20)

† **Nehemiah 4:7-8 NKJV**

- Opposition on the rise... Nehemiah prayed! (**Nehemiah 4:9**; Luke 18:1 NKJV)
 - Opposition on the rise... Nehemiah prayed! (**Nehemiah 5:6**; **Nehemiah 5:8 NKJV**)
 - Opposition on the rise... Nehemiah prayed! (Leviticus 25:36-37; **Nehemiah 5:12 NKJV**)
 - Pray for people with God's Word in mind!
 - Nehemiah reminded the people what God told them!
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3) **NEHEMIAH'S _____ RESULTED FROM PRAYER**

No matter what's going on or matter how dark and grim things may look God is still in control.

Psalms 103:1; 150:1-6 NKJV

Nehemiah 8:6 NKJV - Then all the people answered, "Amen, Amen!" while lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground.

Prayer changes people and people change things!
