

**PERSONAL PRAYER**

Nehemiah 1

In this session we're looking at the subject of *Personal Prayer*. In Chapter 1 we see that Nehemiah showed both patience and persistence in prayer. He did not rush into the project of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem but waited for God's blessing and direction. (note 4 months pass between 1v1 and 2v1).

*CARING FOR GODS PEOPLE AND GOD'S PURPOSES v2-4*

See how much Nehemiah cared about God's people enough to ask about them v2

He also was concerned for Jerusalem and God's honour v2

In what ways do we now share his caring concern –at Surrey Chapel?

He was devastated by the news reported to him (3-4). 'sat down', 'wept', 'mourned and fasted' – how does this all lead to his praying?

When you hear bad news about people you care about, what is your typical reaction/response? Why?

*CONCERN THAT LEADS TO PRAYER v 5-11*

About what issues or problems do you feel most passionate? Why do you think these things concern you more than other equally troubling situations?

Nehemiah was not a prophet or a priest –just an ordinary man. However the news was overwhelming –much beyond his help. NOTE –'God is not limited by our limitations'

Read v 4 again. Is that always our first response?

If you were facing a difficult time, what would you want your friends and loved ones to do for you?

v5 REVERENCE

See how he begins –he does not rush in with his burden. Cf. Ezra 9v6 and Daniel 9v4

How does this approach reflect his/and our attitude towards God?

v6-7 REPENTANCE

Having recognised the greatness of God, note his immediate response.

What is significant (general and personal) about his coming in repentance to God?

What part should this have in our praying? (1 John1 v 8-9)

v8-9 REMEMBER

Not a reminder to God as if He had forgotten, but a plea to activate His Word.

Deuteronomy 8 Moses discourse is all about 'remembering'. Note also Deut 28v63-68

Why does Nehemiah now bring this to the Lord's remembrance?

v10-11 REQUEST

This allusion to the Exodus redemption recalled the faithful and strong hand of God, which had brought Israel out of slavery once before. The statement grounded Nehemiah's confidence in God's power as the basis of his appeal for a second deliverance that will be as successful as the first.

Note how he words his request – what may we learn from this?

CONCLUSION – Discuss ideas for strengthening or improving our own prayer times.

e.g. –using the Bible -perhaps praying through the 'Lord's Prayer' (Matt 6) praying each section personally, for other believers and for the world.

Use of ACTS –Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication (Nehemiah's prayer).

"Prayer is the spontaneous response of the believing heart to God. Those truly transformed by Jesus Christ find themselves lost in the wonder and joy of communion with Him. Prayer is as natural for the Christian as breathing."—*John MacArthur*

DJ.

**PRAYER TIME** Use Nehemiah's pattern in your prayer time. Pray for our brothers and sisters in Christ at Surrey Chapel.