

## Discussion Questions & Quotes For April 21 thru 27, 2024

—*“I learned to pray out of desperation. For most of us, this is how the adventure usually begins. When we finally get serious about prayer, the trigger is usually desperation, not duty.... We don't pray because we ought, we pray because we are without any other recourse.”*

—**David Jeremiah**

—*“There is a difference between tears of hope and tears of hopelessness.”* —**Erwin Lutzer**

—*“Billy Graham once said, ‘Sometimes I’m asked to list the most important steps in preparing for an evangelistic mission, and my reply is always the same: prayer ... prayer ... prayer.’”* —**Billy Graham**

—*“Faith is acting as if God is telling the truth. It is acting as if something is true even when it doesn’t appear to be true in order that it might be shown to be true simply because God said it’s true.”* —**Tony Evans**

—*“To avoid the problem of our prayers becoming routine and repetitious, or if they’re filled with whims and wishes asking for our personal comfort, we should regularly review Nehemiah’s prayer life or the Apostle Paul’s prayers in Ephesians 1 & 3. Prayer is a precious privilege God has given us to unleash His power that changes our lives and the circumstances that influence and impact us on a daily basis.”* —**GAD**

—*“If when we come to prayer our hearts feel dull and unspiritual, we should not try to argue ourselves out of it. Rather, we should admit it frankly and pray our way through. To continue to long for something that is plainly out of the will of God for us is to prove how unreal our consecration actually is.”* —**A. W. Tozer**

—*“Someone has said that the marks of a strong church are wet eyes, bent knees, and a broken heart. We’ll never be powerful until we let God be God and jealously guard His honor.”* —**Erwin Lutzer**

—*“Prayer isn’t an option; it’s an obligation and an opportunity for us to glorify God’s name and receive His blessing. It’s also an opportunity to participate in miracles.”* —**Warren W. Wiersbe**

## —Some Questions for Personal Reflection & Discussion—

—Nehemiah is a book filled with events that display God’s sovereignty & faithfulness; it’s also includes drama, intrigue, & descriptions of various situations & circumstances that are amazingly relevant to what’s happening in our culture today. This study will teach us principles of leadership & obedience that will help strengthen our dependence on the Lord as we apply these truths to our lives. Please carefully read Nehemiah 1:1–2:10 in preparation for this week’s study & also pray that the Lord will use these studies to strengthen our church ministry.

—**1}** *Nehemiah was overwhelmed by the report about Jerusalem he received from his brother. He wept & mourned for days. Sometimes weeping is seen as a weakness, but in Nehemiah’s case, it was a strength. Based on his prayer, he was mourning over the sinfulness that caused the rubble in Jerusalem. Our culture is also saturated with this. With all of the needs related to sinful behavior in the world, how should we respond? How can we know where God wants us to focus? How are we impacted by the sinfulness around us? How should we react to this?*

—**2}** Nehemiah’s prayer is an amazing example of what prayer should be. He covers each aspect of praying by **1) expressing love & adoration to God; 2) confessing personal sin; 3) giving thanks & gratitude for God’s faithfulness; & 4) asking for God’s help.** Do you structure your prayers in a way that covers these categories? How often do you include confession & repentance in your prayers? What are some of the burdens has God placed on your heart? Do they motivate you toward prayer? Why is it always beneficial to make prayer a top priority?

—**3}** *At the close of Nehemiah’s prayer, he says, “O Lord, I beseech You, may Your ear be attentive to the prayer of Your servant and the prayer of Your servants **who delight to revere (glorify) Your name.** Why should we realize that God’s purpose is primarily His glory, not our happiness? How are God’s glory & our happiness connected to each other?*

—**4}** The trends & temptations of our society often distract us from the principles that God’s Word teaches about His will (**see 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18**). To a some extent, we’ve become slaves to pettiness & poor priorities, worshipping idols & worrying about trivial matters, grumbling & griping about things that aren’t as important as we make them. What does Nehemiah’s response to the overwhelming report teach us? What can we learn from the fact that he prayed for over 4 months before he was able to ask the king for permission to go to Jerusalem?