

NEHEMIAH'S PRAYER: 1:5-11

INTRODUCTION

1. A man who had prayed that his father might live and not die said his faith and trust in prayer was shattered when his father died.
 1. Apparently this man trusted in prayer more than he trusted in God. My faith is not in prayer.. It is in God. My faith is not in baptism: It is in Christ.
 2. Another thing that hinders our prayers is that in fair weather we often forget to pray while in the storm we are ready to demand of God that he put back together that which has fallen apart.
2. What prayer is: Some one has described prayer as the rope attached to the bell in the belfry: We pull the rope and it rings the bell in heaven.
 1. When we read God's word he is speaking to us. When we pray, we speak to God.
3. The purpose of prayer: Prayer is not for the purpose of demanding something of God as a spoiled child would demand something of his parents.
 1. Prayer is not for the purpose of informing God.
 2. Though prayer is used in emergency; it is not for emergency only. The story of the grown woman, an elders daughter, who replied to the preacher concerning prayer in the room of her seriously ill mother. She said, "No, we don't want prayer, for we don't want mama to think that she is going to die."
4. The right attitude must prevail in prayer: We should conclude all of our requests in prayer to God with the words of Jesus when he said, "Not as I will, but thy will be done." Matthew 26:39-44

NEHEMIAH'S PRAYER: 1:5-11

1. Love for his brethren, concern and sorrow as to their welfare the background of Nehemiah's prayer.
 1. Hanani had come for a visit with Nehemiah and reported to him that:
 - (1) The remnant of Jews left in Jerusalem having escaped the captivity were in great affliction and reproach. Neh..
 - (2) The walls of Jerusalem were broken down and the gates were burned with fire. 1:3,4
 2. This report caused Nehemiah to sit down and weep, and mourn and fast certain days, and pray before the God of heaven. Neh. 1:4.

NEHEMIAH'S INTEREST IN ISRAEL DISPLAYED IN FOUR WAYS

1. HIS INQUIRY CONCERNING THEIR CONDITION "I asked them concerning the Jews." Neh. 1:2
 1. Concern for the spiritual prosperity of the church will prompt similar inquiries. In nothing is our spirit more clearly shown than in the way in which we receive tidings of the welfare or misfortune of others. Lessons to learn:
 - (1) In the adversity of his race, Nehemiah forgot his own comfortable prosperity.
 - (2) To him, the sufferings of his people were his own misfortunes. It was actually with Nehemiah as we sometimes sing:

"When each can feel his brother's sigh,
And with him bear a part;
When sorry flows from eye to eye,
And joy from heart to heart.

"When free from envy, scorn and pride,
Our wishes all above,
Each can his brother's failings hide,
And show a brother's love."

2. SORROW OVER THEIR CONDITION "I sat down and wept." Neh. 1:4
 1. Of there is much in the state of religion to grieve really zealous Christians: Coldness, Indifference, divisions, errors, opposition of every sort and kind, broken walls and burned gates through which the enemies enter to scatter and destroy God's people.

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1. What prayer is: Some one has described prayer as the rope attached to the ball in the lottery. We will use this rope and let it reach the ball in heaven.

2. The purpose of prayer: Prayer is not for the purpose of obtaining something of God as a spoiled child would expect something of his parents.

3. Prayer is not for the purpose of informing God.

4. Prayer is not for emergency: It is not for emergency only. The story of the woman who had an ailment, who reached to the hem of Jesus' garment, for he said, "Daughter, thy faith has made thee whole." The woman said, "For he touched me, and I was healed."

5. The right attitude must prevail in prayer: We should combine all our requests in prayer to God with the words of Jesus: "My Father, my Father, all things are possible unto thee."

6. Prayer is not for the purpose of informing God.

7. Prayer is not for emergency.

8. Prayer is not for the purpose of obtaining something of God.

9. Prayer is not for the purpose of informing God.

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NEHEMIAH'S INTEREST IN ISRAEL DISPLAYED IN FOUR WAYS, Continued

3. PRAYER FOR THEIR DELIVERANCE "I beseech thee...Let thine ear be attentive." Neh. 1:5, 6
1. Genuine interest in the welfare of the church will express itself in prayer.
 2. The weakest can pray. All need to begin, continue, and end their plans and labors for the good of God's people with prayer.
 3. His confession of sins:
 - (1) It is easy to confess and acknowledge the sins of others but more difficult to acknowledge one's own sins. Nehemiah said, "We have sinned before thee: Both I and my father's house have sinned." Neh. 1:6
 - (2) His confessions in his prayer were: 1. Personal. 2. Domestic, for the family of God; In this instance Israel. 3. Unreserved. He did not endeavour to cover up for himself or Israel.
4. BY HIS DETERMINATION TO ASSIST THEM. "Grant him mercy (success) Prosper him in his in the sight of this man." Neh. 1:11
1. When we ask God for help we should be ready for service.
 2. Nehemiah did not satisfy himself with weeping and praying for that was not all he could do.
 3. It is a worthless sympathy which only prays when it has power to help.
 4. When we pray, "Lord bless the orphans and the widows;" bless our missionaries; bless those who are lost in sin with opportunities to hear the gospel and be saved; forgive us of our sins ETC, are these prayers empty, meaningless platitudes before the Lord because we sit down and do nothing about the matter when we could be and should be up and doing?
 5. Prayer that does not move the hands and feet but the lips only is worthless and I think we could say hypocritical.

DO NOT BE DRIVEN TO PRAYER: PRACTICE IT AS A WONDERFUL PRIVILEGE.

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