



# 21 DAYS OF PRAYER

# 05

DAY 05

JANUARY 13, 2023

## Yajaira Gomez

KEY SCRIPTURES

**Nehemiah 1:4-11**

### “When others are distressed, how can I pray?”

What do you do when you hear of a person in distress? How do you respond to seeing or reading about another nation that is at war? Can you identify with those that are suffering even if you are not going through the same things?

About 400 years before Jesus was born, God’s chosen people, were in a state of distress: their cultural practices had been threatened, the city of Jerusalem was governed by the Babylonians, and their place of worship (the Temple of Solomon) was destroyed. Yet one of the Jews, Nehemiah was in an important position: he was the chief treasurer, keeper of the Persian King’s signet ring, and he tasted the king’s food to make sure no one had poisoned it. Because of this position of influence, Nehemiah got to live in the king’s fortified palace. Although Nehemiah was about 1300km away from Jerusalem, and living a good life, Nehemiah still inquired of his fellow Israelites and land.

Sadly, the report was very bad. His brother let him know that the walls of the city were broken down and the city gates were burned with fire.

In the ancient world, a city without walls was a city vulnerable to its enemies. The people of Jerusalem were disarmed, having no defense nor protection. The condition of his people broke Nehemiah’s heart. He was very emotional (v. 3) weeping and mourning for many days, and not eating. Yet despite his feelings and Israel’s needy state, Nehemiah chose to respond with prayer to other peoples’ distress. He did not complain, remain defeated in his emotions, nor go find someone else to fix the problem. Instead, he became part of the solution and started with what he knew best to do – pray.

### **(5-7) Nehemiah prays to God in humility.**

- Nehemiah praises God by acknowledging WHO God is (v.5).
- Nehemiah shows dependency (v.6a).
- Nehemiah confesses sin (v.6b).
- Nehemiah identifies with the needy (v.7).
- Nehemiah persevered in prayer (1:1; 2:1) for four months before he did anything.

Nehemiah left his pain and anxiety with God. Getting up a city’s wall in 52 days was miraculous and it could only have been done because of the time prayed into the project. God renewed the team’s strength daily including Nehemiah’s (Isaiah 40:31).

### **(8-10) Nehemiah reminds God of His promises.**

- Nehemiah quoted scripture (Dt 30:1-5).
- Nehemiah pled the promises of God. If they turned back to God then he would give back their land. This was a conditional promise. The people had to return to God and keep His commandments (Dt 9:29).

**(11) Nehemiah prays with a heart ready to do something.**

- Nehemiah understood that he needed favour before the king. Although this king of Persia was very well esteemed before many including nations, Nehemiah understood that the king was just a human being, as God was more powerful. Therefore, Nehemiah asked

God to make him part of the solution. When you ask God to use you, expect that God will work through you.

Nehemiah is a great person to look up to when it comes to praying. This is not because he was very close to a King or government leaders, or because Nehemiah could make some decisions for the nation, nor because he led the rebuilding of a city’s wall. Rather, Nehemiah illustrates that he is a person to look up to because he was close to God, and that same God worked through Nehemiah’s influence to help those in distress.

## REFLECTIONS

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- ▶ Acknowledge that you know WHO God is and tell Him that.
- ▶ Tell God you are dependent upon Him and His word.
- ▶ Confess your sins (anything that separates you from God).
- ▶ Identify with those that are suffering and pray for them (starting with your household, extended family, church, workplace, school, other cities, and countries).
- ▶ Present your dreams and goals to God asking for guidance.
- ▶ Nehemiah persevered in prayer as repairing the walls was no easy task. An unwallled city was always vulnerable as the people, their loved ones, and valuables could easily be stolen. Do you fear something or someone of value being taken from you? Pray for walls of faith to be rebuilt.
- ▶ You influence those around you (home, school, work, church). Pray how you can use your influence to help those who are broken and needy.

## PRAYER

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Lord, I come to You like Nehemiah acknowledging that I am nothing without You. You are the ONLY true God. Being dependent on You ALWAYS gives me peace. Would You forgive my sins and anything that separates me from You. As I identify with the needy, help me persevere in prayer for them so that I know how and if I can help them. In Jesus name I pray and thank you. Amen.

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