

**Prepare:** If you brought your bible, please turn to Nehemiah chapter 1. **Nehemiah was not a priest, a theologian or a religious leader but a civil servant.**

**Review:** Last week I talked about how the book of Nehemiah is about **unfinished business that needed to be finished.** It's about **God's people and God's place needing to be rebuilt, restored so that there can be revival.** In the same way, our church needs to be rebuilt, restored so that we can see revival. **And Some of you need to be rebuilt, restored so that you can see revival in your....**

**Subject: Becoming a difference maker starts with prayer.** If you want to make a difference in the world around you, **it starts with prayer but not just any type of prayer.** Today I'm talking about **prayers that make a difference.**

**Need:** Where do you need **God to make a difference in your life?**

### **POWERFUL PRAYERS FLOW OUT OF 6 THINGS:**

**Text:** Nehemiah 1:1-11

*1 The words of Nehemiah son of Hacaliah:*

*In the month of Kislev in the twentieth year, while I was in the citadel of Susa, <sup>2</sup> Hanani, one of my brothers, came from Judah with some other men, (13 years had passed) and I questioned (initiative) them about the Jewish remnant that survived the exile, and also about Jerusalem.*

*<sup>3</sup> They said to me, "Those who survived the exile and are back in the province are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been burned with fire." (economic and spiritual implications)*

*Powerful prayers flow out of...*

#### **1. A Preoccupation with change (v. 2)**

Notice the focus of his q's: God's people - God's Place

Whatever preoccupies your mind should preoccupy your prayers.

Whatever you most think about **is what you most care about and what you most care about** should be what you most pray about.

Examples: Does your marriage, your\_\_\_\_-preoccupy your mind? Then start praying for that.

Prayers that make a difference are fueled by a preoccupation that SOMETHING MUST HAPPEN.

*Powerful prayers flow out of...*

#### **2. A Passion that persists (v.4, 6)**

*<sup>4</sup> When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days (4 months) I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven.*

Notice he weeps, he mourns, he fasts for 4 months - day and night.

You must be like the woman who wants justice from the judge: **PERSISTENT.**

#### **P.U.S.H. - PRAY UNTIL SOMETHING HAPPENS.**

JUST GET PRAYING! DON'T STOP!

**Call to Action:** Let's Pray/Fast Together for One Day???

*Powerful prayers flow out of...*

#### **3. A Dependence on God's ability (vs.5-6a)**

**Lets look at Nehemiah's Prayer**

*5 Then I said:*

*"O Lord, God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with those who love him and obey his commands, 6 let your ear be attentive and your*

eyes open to hear the prayer your servant is praying before you day and night for your servants, the people of Israel.

It's a long way from Susa from Jerusalem. (800 miles). **It looks like an impossible task**, that's why its been 150 yrs in ruins.

What's your impossible task or situation?  
We need God dependence, not self dependence.

Powerful prayers flow out of...

#### 4. A **Confession** that owns the sin (vs.6b-7)

*I confess the sins we Israelites, including myself and my father's house, have committed against you. 7 We have acted very wickedly toward you. We have not obeyed the commands, decrees and laws you gave your servant Moses.*

Many of our problems are **born out of disobedience or the consequences from disobedience.**

They had **disunity born from pride and independence born from prayerlessness.**

Sometimes **the problem to my problems is starring at me from the mirror.**

It is easier to blame others **than to face the truth.**

**What part have you played?**

Powerful prayers flow out of...

#### 5. A **Confidence** in God's faithfulness (vs.8-10)

8 "Remember the instruction you gave your servant Moses, saying, 'If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the nations, 9 but if you return to me and obey my commands, then even if your exiled people are at the

farthest horizon, I will gather them from there and bring them to the place I have chosen as a dwelling for my Name.'

10 "They are your servants and your people, whom you redeemed by your great strength and your mighty hand.

God's promises cut both ways, **they break and restore walls.**

God is more concerned w/ my obedience than my success.  
**BE REMINDED THAT GOD IS A PROMISE KEEPER**

Powerful prayers flow out of...

#### 6. A **Commitment** to action (v.11)

11 O Lord, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of this your servant and to the prayer of your servants who delight in revering your name. Give your servant success today by granting him favor in the presence of this man."

**Prayer of action** - Give me success - with Artaxerxes

**YOU SHOULD NEVER PRAY FOR SOMETHING IF YOU ARE NOT WILLING TO BE THE ANSWER TO YOUR OWN PRAYER.**

Ex: Reach my father, my husband, my boss, my kids...

### **3 THINGS YOU DON'T WANT TO FORGET**

#### 1. Prayer is a **first response**, not a **last resort.** (v.4)

Did you notice Nehemiah moved quickly to prayer.

#### 2. Prayer is the bridge from **here to action.** (v.11b)

The problem we tend to have is not lack of prayer but lack of action.

#### 3. Prayer aligns **my plans with God's priorities.** (v.11a)

We have to get onboard with God's priorities.

## Conclusion

Choose to live for more.

Choose to have a kingdom impact.

Choose to be a Nehemiah.