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PRAYER

"Father, we thank you for your grace and goodness. May your face continually shine upon us, so that your ways may be known in our communities. We praise you, God, and may all the people praise you. Then our land will yield its harvest and you, Lord, will bless us (Psalm 67:1-4). Lord, we give you our land, our homes, our labor, and our city. Look with favor on our community, protect our citizens and leaders, and enrich our land so that we may be a blessing to others. We pray that you would be honored and lifted up in our community. Amen."

Seven Powerful Prayers for the City - Vineyard Church

WARM UP

(OPTIONAL)

If you could consider one specific building or house as your home, where would it be and why? Would it be the home of your childhood, where you live now, or somewhere you'd want to live in the future?

NOTES

WORD

¹ *The words of Nehemiah the son of Hacaliah.*

Now it happened in the month of Chislew, in the twentieth year, as I was in Susa the citadel, ² that Hanani, one of my brothers, came with certain men from Judah. And I asked them concerning the Jews who escaped, who had survived the exile, and concerning Jerusalem.

³ And they said to me, "The remnant there in the province who had survived the exile is in great trouble and shame. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates are destroyed by fire." ⁴ As soon as I heard these words I sat down and wept and mourned for days, and I continued fasting and praying before the God of heaven. ⁵ And I said, "O Lord God of heaven, the great and awesome God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, ⁶ let your ear be attentive and your eyes open, to hear the prayer of your servant that I now pray before you day and night for the people of Israel your servants, confessing the sins of the people of Israel, which we have sinned against you. Even I and my father's house have sinned. ⁷ We have acted very corruptly against you and have not kept the commandments, the statutes, and the rules that you commanded your servant Moses. ⁸ Remember the word that you commanded your servant Moses, saying, 'If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the peoples, ⁹ but if you return to me and keep my commandments and do them, though your outcasts are in the uttermost parts of heaven, from there I will gather them and bring them to the place that I have chosen, to make my name dwell there.' ¹⁰ They are your servants and your people, whom you have redeemed by your great power and by your strong hand. ¹¹ O Lord, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of your servant, and to the prayer of your servants who delight to fear your name, and give success to your servant today, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man." Now I was cupbearer to the king.

NEHEMIAH 1:1-11

"Nehemiah knew most of these facts before this. The wall and gates had been destroyed over 140 years before. But this graphic firsthand description of the scene by Nehemiah's brother, including the news of things after the ban by Artaxerxes, devastated Nehemiah. He wept, mourned, fasted, and prayed for days, entreating God to do something about these deplorable conditions. God responded by doing something—through Nehemiah! We learn that ...

The person God uses has a burden for His people, a vision for His purpose, and a commitment to His purpose.

First, Nehemiah saw the great need, which burdened his heart. He also saw what God wanted to accomplish, and he committed himself to see it through, in spite of the many difficulties."

-Stephen J Cole, *The Man Who Cried About A Wall*

GUIDE QUESTIONS

(NUMBERED ACCORDING TO LEVEL OF DEPTH AND READINESS TO SHARE)

1. On a scale from 1-10 (1 = none at all; 10 = extreme), how would you rate your level of compassion for the city you live in? Why have you rated yourself this way?
2. What do you think God thinks of the city you live in? How does this differ from the way you think about your city?
3. Nehemiah's burden for his city was about God's people, and this drove him to tears of sadness and dismay. This dismay caused him to take action and approach King Artaxerxes to appeal for materials to rebuild the walls of the city. What might be ways that God is moving in your heart to see change in the areas you call home?
4. How can we fight and shrug off the subtle, but aggressive worldliness that keeps seeping into the church?
5. If you are not yet a follower of God our Father, would you be willing to acknowledge him as your God, and enable him to have all authority as the one who calls the shots in your life as your Father who loves you? Would you like to enter into a saving relationship with God through Jesus? Ask your Life Group leader to lead you in prayer to receive Christ. You can pray this prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner, and I ask for your forgiveness. I believe you died for my sins and rose from the dead. I turn from my sins and invite you to come into my heart and life. I want to trust and follow you as my Lord and Saviour. In Jesus' name, Amen.