

GROUP QUESTIONS

1. What are some patterns/structures for personal prayer that you have tried or have been taught? Share with the group.
2. What are some of the obstacles that stop you beginning your planning in life with prayer?
3. What does this warning from James 4:13-15 have to say to our generation? *Now listen, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money." Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead, you ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that."*



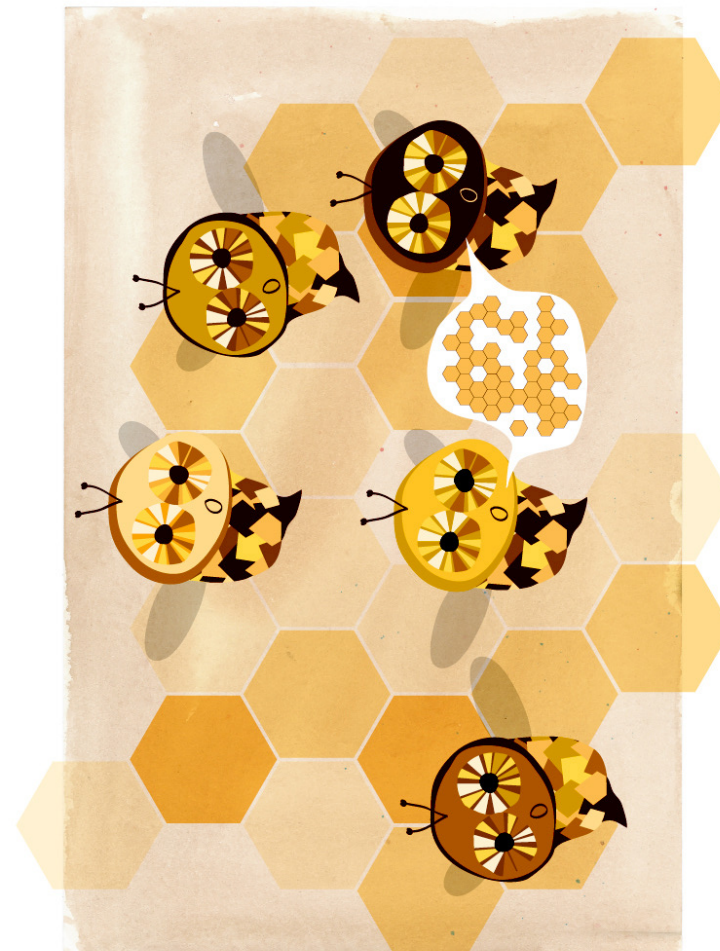
NEHEMIAH SERIES—MARCH/APRIL COMMUNITY UNDER CONSTRUCTION

- March 14
Neh 1:1-3 Building a new community
- March 21
Neh 1:4-2:8 Praying & Planning
- March 28
Neh 2:9-20 Facing Opposition
- April 4 Easter Sunday
Holy Communion
- Neh 4:1-14 Pain and Progress



5.30pm Sundays

Community Under Construction



Background Reading (optional)

Ezra chs. 1-6; Nehemiah 1-2; 2 Chronicles 36; Daniel; Jeremiah 21-52; Ezekiel 26-30; Haggai; Zechariah.

Study 2

Nehemiah 1:5-11



- 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. 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.
- 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.
- 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 favour in the presence of this man." I was the cupbearer to the king.

- ⇒ Jerusalem's history of wickedness was notorious. Previous attempts to rebuild the temple and city walls were crushed by the Persian King (see Ezra 4:7-23) lest they continue their old ways. Israel was alone and helpless.
- ⇒ As Jesus taught, so Nehemiah begins prayer from a heavenly perspective (see Matt. 6:9)
- ⇒ Nehemiah knows the response God's covenant demands and comes honestly, empty-handed in prayer.
- ⇒ Nehemiah knows the promises of Scripture and quotes from **Deuteronomy**, pleading as Moses once did:
 - ⇒ 28:64
 - ⇒ 30:1-4
 - ⇒ 12:5
 - ⇒ 9:29
- ⇒ The project to build the city walls and temple would have no success without God's providence (e.g. Psalm 127:1)

Nehemiah rebuilds Jerusalem's walls
 Zechariah Temple 2nd Exiles & 3rd Exiles
 Haggai rebuilt Ezra's reforms with Nehemiah
 1st Exiles return
 Fall of Jerusalem Temple destroyed
 Dan. 1 2Ch. 36
 607 586 537 520 516 458 445

Learning from Nehemiah's Prayer

1. Acknowledge God's greatness, glory & love
 Neh. 1:5
 Luke 11:2
2. Have confidence that God hears prayers
 Neh. 1:6,11
 Luke 11:5-9
3. Acknowledge your wrongdoing & that of the community you're part of. Have a sincere desire to be reconciled with God and others.
 Neh 1:6,7
 Luke 11:4
4. Come to God empty-handed (ie. without any boasting or sense of merit) and trust in the grace and mercy of God.
 Neh. 1:7
 Luke 11:3
5. Draw upon the Scriptures to trust in God's promises and to ask God to act according to His Word.
 Neh. 1:8-10
 Luke 11:9-10
6. Ask God for what you need, putting God's purposes first, before your own and expecting God to provide.
 Neh. 1:11
 Luke 11:9,10

