



PRAYER GUIDE

"After I looked things over, I stood up and said to the nobles, the officials and the rest of the people, 'Don't be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your families, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your homes'" (Nehemiah 4:14^{NIV}).

Parents, engaging your kids in biblical truth over these 10 weeks is one of the primary roles that God has entrusted you with.

However, as believers, we have an enemy, Satan, who will try to thwart any and every plan you make to disciple your kids. This is why fervent prayer is so vital!

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- **Spiritual perspective.** Nehemiah was broken over the situation the people of God were in. Others saw the broken walls but didn't see what God wanted to accomplish. Change is easier for parents and students when both the need and the power to change are clear to all.
- **Spiritual passion.** Nehemiah knew he could not sit back and allow his people to live defenseless against enemy attacks. Likewise, pray for a renewed passion of spiritual things. Spiritual change starts in you.
- **Protection from Satan's attacks.** Nehemiah and those who labored with him experienced tremendous attacks from the enemy (they were mocked, they were threatened, and they were encouraged to compromise). Do not compromise your beliefs for others; but strive to learn to get along with others.
- **Wisdom.** When Nehemiah came to Jerusalem, he didn't tell everyone everything he knew. Rather, he shared the knowledge he had in a timely and wise manner. Parents need God's wisdom on what to say and when and how to say it.
- **An open heart from students.** It was said of the people who built the wall, *"The people had a mind to work"* (Nehemiah 4:6). Seeing great change is possible when God gives a heart to learn.
- **Great faith in God.** *"The God of heaven will give us success; therefore we His servants will arise and build"* (Nehemiah 2:20). Rebuilding the wall was a monumental work. Pray we will see parents embrace the responsibilities of being a disciple maker, and students will embrace the mindset of a disciple. This is no easy task; however, God is able!

THE PRAYER BACKSTORY

Nehemiah was the leader who initially spoke the challenging words from which we get the phrase, "Fight for Your Family." He said, *"When I saw their fear, I rose and spoke to the nobles, the officials and the rest of the people: 'Do not be afraid of them; remember the Lord who is great and awesome, and fight for your families, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your homes.'"* (Nehemiah 4:14^{NIV})

As we look at the context from which Nehemiah spoke, we see four truths about the imperative of praying fervently like it matters.

THE FIGHT FOR YOUR FAMILY BEGINS WITH HONESTY AND PRAYER.

Nehemiah heard the following report about Jerusalem, “*‘The [people]...are in great distress and reproach, and the wall of Jerusalem is broken down and its gates are burned with fire.’ When I heard these words, I sat down and wept and mourned for days; and I was fasting and praying before the God of heaven*” (Nehemiah 1:3–4).

- Wherever you and your family are in the discipleship process, acknowledge it. A parent may need to say, “I haven’t been as engaged in discipleship as I should have” or “I wish we had started this process years ago.” Nehemiah had to clear the rubble before he began to rebuild.
- However, because discipleship is God’s will, be encouraged—pray, lay hold of God! “[*Nehemiah*] was fasting and praying before the God of heaven” (Nehemiah 1:4). Fervent prayer was being made months before the first stone on the wall of Jerusalem was touched!

THE FIGHT FOR YOUR FAMILY PROGRESSES THROUGH PRAYER.

Nehemiah began to pray, and he continued to pray, “*O Lord, I beseech You, may Your ear be attentive to the prayer of Your servant and the prayer of Your servants who delight to revere Your name, and make Your servant successful today and grant him compassion before this man*” (Nehemiah 1:11). Nehemiah was specific in his praying. Like Nehemiah, ask God to make you “successful” in this discipleship journey! You are in the midst of His will.

GOD PROVIDES THE FIGHT FOR YOUR FAMILY EXPERIENCES THROUGH PRAYER.

Nehemiah was the cupbearer to the king, the man with great resources that could be used by God to rebuild the walls. Four months after Nehemiah began praying about the plight of the people of Jerusalem, God sovereignly opened a door for Nehemiah to share the burden of his heart. “*Then the king said to me, ‘What would you request?’ So I prayed to the God of heaven*” (Nehemiah 2:4). If you read the chapter, you see that Nehemiah thought through what he needed. He had a definite timeline and list of resources he was requesting from the king. However, at that crucial moment to make a decision, Nehemiah didn’t fall back on his wisdom, “*He prayed to the God of heaven.*” As you lead your family, remember, “The army that advances on its knees never retreats.”

THE FIGHT FOR YOUR FAMILY WILL BE SUSTAINED THROUGH PRAYER.

When Nehemiah encountered opposition, he didn’t run to other people; he ran to God in prayer! “*Hear, O our God, how we are despised! Return their reproach on their own heads and give them up for plunder in a land of captivity. Do not forgive their iniquity and let not their sin be blotted out before You, for they have demoralized the builders...But we prayed to our God, and because of them we set up a guard against them day and night*” (Nehemiah 4:4–5, 9). Nehemiah was honest and passionate in his praying.