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Travailing Prayer - Sparks - posted by AbideinHim (), on: 2019/9/22 7:41

I pray before You now, day and night, for the children of Israel Your servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel which we have sinned against You. (Nehemiah 1:6)

It is one thing, beloved, for us to get a kind of public concern about things and then begin to make a great noise about it amongst men; to advertise, to demonstrate, and to give it a public form in utterance and effort and organization; to join ourselves to some cause, or to join some cause to ourselves, and then in that cause to make a great big affair of it: that is one thing. And that may have all manner of elements which just fall short of that which is essential and necessary from the Lord's standpoint. It is one thing to come to a situation from the outside, and link ourselves on with it, and take it up, and make it our work for life, our life-interest; it is quite another thing for the Lord to put into our hearts, in secret, an almost unbearable, intolerable burden which is His own heart-burden, and for us first of all to bear that thing secretly in the presence of God upon our hearts in a deep out-pouring of travailing prayer; quite another thing to come to the Lord's interests in that way.

There are plenty of people whom you could get interested in a cause; whom you could get to take up a piece of work requiring help, but it is another thing to have that spiritual fellowship with God which results in God putting His travail into your own soul. The difference is that in the one instance the thing is something objective; we come along and interest ourselves in it, take it up; but it is apart from us. It has our interest, it has our energy, it has our resources, but it is something objective to ourselves. It is a piece of work, a movement, a testimony ' using that word in a technical sense. The other thing is this: before the Lord we take responsibility. Do you notice that "we" in chapter 1, verse 6? Nehemiah is a part of this and this is a part of him. You notice how, all the way through, in dealing with this matter he uses the word "we." He is apart from the whole thing, that is, he has not accepted the conditions; he is not responsible for the state of things; he certainly repudiates the whole thing, and does not for one moment agree with it, and yet he is in this thing as though he were responsible for it; as though God could lay it all at his own door. The thing has come so near to his own heart that he does not stand here and the situation there, but he finds himself as one with it. It is his own burden, and he takes the thing in responsibility upon his own shoulders before God in prayer, and prays vicarious prayer over this situation.

By T. Austin-Sparks from: Nehemiah - A Living Message for God's People Today - Part 2