

travailing prayer = burdened, focused, crying out to God

Nehemiah 2:1-3

1 In the month of Nisan (April) in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was brought for him, I took the wine and gave it to the king. I had not been sad in his presence before; 2 so the king asked me, "Why does your face look so sad when you are not ill? This can be nothing but sadness of heart." I was very much afraid, 3 but I said to the king, "May the king live forever! Why should my face not look sad when the city where my fathers are buried lies in ruins, and its gates have been destroyed by fire?"

Nehemiah 1:1 – news about condition of Jerusalem delivered in month of Kislev (December)

Five months of fasting, praying, travailing and...waiting.

Psalms 56:8

You keep track of all my sorrows. You have collected all my tears in your bottle. You have recorded each one in your book.

When you set your feet on the praying way, God starts tracking your sorrows and collecting your tears.

travailing tears = when we know God has all the power and resources to step in and change what needs to be changed but the way things are unfolding it feels like He is inattentive and unresponsive to my prayers

-- John the Baptist (Luke 7)

-- Mary & Martha (John 11)

"I could embrace mystery or run from it. Could I make peace with not knowing why my prayers weren't answered, or would this be the experience I define God by, the one experience that overwhelms all the others I'd had along the way? Could I continue to trust God without having answers and reasons? We are all going to face painful disorientation at some point, and the challenging invitation is to trust even in the darkness."

– Jenna (young adult who travailed in prayer for a friend, only to have that friend die)

Hold on to what you do know while you journey through what you don't know.

"The deeper our faith, the more doubt we must endure; the deeper our hope, the more prone we are to despair; the deeper our love, the more pain its loss will bring: these are a few of the paradoxes we must hold as human beings. If we refuse to hold them in the hopes of living without doubt, despair, and pain, we also find ourselves living without hope, faith, and love."

– Parker Palmer



Monica (332-387), mother of St. Augustine

"I decided to speak less to Augustine about God and to speak more to God about Augustine."

St. Augustine would often introduce himself as...

"I'm nothing more than the son of my mother's tears."

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