

“Good Grief”

“Woe to those... who drink wine in bowls and anoint themselves with the finest oils, but are not grieved over the ruin of Joseph!” (Amos 6:4, 6)

A Cause for Concern

Nehemiah 1:1-11 – ¹“The words of Nehemiah the son of Hacaliah. Now it happened in the month of Chislev, in the twentieth year, as I was in Susa the citadel, ²that 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. ³And 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.’ ⁴As 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. ⁵And 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, ⁶let 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. ⁷We have acted very corruptly against you and have not kept the commandments, the statutes, and the rules that you commanded your servant Moses. ⁸Remember the word that you commanded your servant Moses, saying, ‘If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the peoples, ⁹but 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.’ ¹⁰They are your servants and your people, whom you have redeemed by your great power and by your strong hand. ¹¹O 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.’”

Contorted Crusades

Luke 12:16-20 – ¹⁶“And he told them a parable, saying, ‘The land of a rich man produced plentifully, ¹⁷and he thought to himself, ‘What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?’ ¹⁸And he said, ‘I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. ¹⁹And I will say to my soul, ‘Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.’ ²⁰But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?’”

Acts 9:1-3 – ¹“But Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest ²and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. ³Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven shone around him.”

Causes Worth Dying For

1 Samuel 17:29 – “And David said, ‘What have I done now? Is there not a cause?’” (NKJV)

1 John 3:16 – “By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.”

Acts 20:24 – “But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.”

(ESV used unless otherwise noted)