

## **A Rebuilder Prepares And Seizes Opportunities**

### Introduction

Nehemiah 2:1 And it came to pass in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king, that wine was before him: and I took up the wine, and gave it unto the king. Now I had not been beforetime sad in his presence.

Nehemiah 2:2 Wherefore the king said unto me, Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick? this is nothing else but sorrow of heart. Then I was very sore afraid,

Nehemiah have been praying for 4 months (Chisleu – Nov to Nisan -March). This is the 20<sup>th</sup> Year of King Artaxerxes of Persia. Nehemiah was busy doing his normal routines of life as being the cupbearer. Nehemiah had this spiritual burden in his heart, and it so overwhelmed his countenance and this was spotted by the King. The heart when overwhelmed with grief and sorrow, will manifest itself in the person.

Nehemiah 2:3 And said unto the king, Let the king live for ever: why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, lieth waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire?

Nehemiah was respectful still (let the king live forever) but was honest about what is happening that caused him to be sad. He honest mentioned that the city, which was the place of his father's sepulchres lie waste and the gates were burned, referring to Jerusalem. ( The tribe of Judah occupied Jerusalem and therefore Nehemiah was from the tribe of Judah)

Nehemiah 2:4 Then the king said unto me, For what dost thou make request? So I prayed to the God of heaven.

The king upon hearing Nehemiah's situation asked – what do you need. This was the moment Nehemiah was waiting. God's doors will opened to the man ready to walk through it.

There was not much time between the king's request and the answer, but in Nehemiah's heart there is always time to call upon the King of kings.

Nehemiah 2:5 And I said unto the king, If it please the king, and if thy servant have found favour in thy sight, that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it.

He seized the opportunity and he acted boldly – he asked for permission to go and rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem.

Nehemiah 2:6 And the king said unto me, (the queen also sitting by him,) For how long shall thy journey be? and when wilt thou return? So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time.

The bible indicated interestingly that there was the King was who sitting next to Nehemiah. Who is the queen sitting beside Nehemiah??

- There are 2 possibilities: queen Atossa who was the daughter of Cyrus (*Ezra 1:1-2 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah.*) / Queen Esther – whom some historians claim to be around at this time, and that King Ahauserus was King Artaxerxes
- The key learning point from this is when God calls, He will provide.

Nehemiah 2:7 Moreover I said unto the king, If it please the king, let letters be given me to the governors beyond the river, that they may convey me over till I come into Judah;

Nehemiah 2:8 And a letter unto Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the palace which appertained to the house, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall enter into. And the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me.

Some key learning points about Rebuilding from Nehemiah 2: 1 - 8

1. Nehemiah's prayerfulness never ceased. His burden was ever on his heart. He was waiting on the Lord and this prayerfulness reflected His dependency on God.
2. Nehemiah's decisiveness in seizing the opportunities. In Eccle 11:1 – 6, Solomon wisely taught us to make use of every opportunity to do good now because you never really know what will happen in the future. Sometimes, opportunities only come once. And we must seize it.

John 12:7 Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this.

John 12:8 For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always.

Mary gave expensive perfume to Jesus and was rebuked by practical disciples. Yet the Lord rebuked them and asked that Mary be let alone to give the sacrifice because that was the only opportunity for her to anoint the Lord Jesus before He dies and there will be no more opportunity. Nehemiah seized the opportunity to ask for permission to go rebuild, request for resources for the building and got authorisation to go where he needed to go to rebuild Jerusalem.

### 3. Nehemiah's Spiritual-mindedness

Neh 2:8 And a letter unto Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the palace which appertained to the house, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall enter into. **And the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me.**

#### Application

Matthew 25:14-15 For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.

God has given us abilities. And God has also provided us different levels of opportunities - some 5 talents, some 2 talents and some 1 talents. Are we serving Him using our abilities for the opportunities given to us.

- God called us to Ambassador – to grow, to serve, to give and to surrender for the purpose of helping someone to Christ.
- There are many lost souls who have never heard the gospel, some Christians who have never been discipled and many more need God in their lives if someone will just guide them.
- Are we available for the Lord to use us?

**GOD DOES NOT NEED OUR ABILITIES. HE WANTS OUR AVAILABILITY.**