

Main Text: Nehemiah 2:1-12

Nehemiah 2

2 And it came to pass in the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King [a]Artaxerxes, *when wine was* before him, that I took the wine and gave it to the king. Now I had never been sad in his presence before.

2 Therefore the king said to me, “Why is your face sad, since you *are* not sick? This is nothing but sorrow of heart.”

So I became [a]dreadfully afraid,

3 and said to the king, “May the king live forever! Why should my face not be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers’ tombs, *lies* waste, and its gates are burned with fire?”

4 Then the king said to me, “What do you request?”

So I prayed to the God of heaven.

5 And I said to the king, “If it pleases the king, and if your servant has found favor in your sight, I ask that you send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers’ tombs, that I may rebuild it.”

6 Then the king said to me (the queen also sitting beside him), “How long will your journey be? And when will you return?” So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time.

7 Furthermore I said to the king, “If it pleases the king, let letters be given to me for the governors *of the region* beyond [b]the River, that they must permit me to pass through till I come to Judah,

8 and a letter to Asaph the keeper of the king’s forest, that he must give me timber to make beams for the gates of the [c]citadel which *pertains* to the [d]temple, for the city wall, and for the house that I will occupy.” And the king granted *them* to me according to the good hand of my God upon me.

9 Then I went to the governors *in the region* beyond the River, and gave them the king’s letters. Now the king had sent captains of the army and horsemen with me.

10 When Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite [k]official heard *of it*, they were deeply disturbed that a man had come to seek the well-being of the children of Israel.

11 So I came to Jerusalem, and was there three days.

12 And I arose in the night, I and some few men with me; neither told I any man what my God had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem: neither was there any beast with me, save the beast that I rode upon.

Review:

Premise: #1 Private property is the hallmark principal of freedom, wellness, purpose, and security. Private property - What is yours is yours and what's mine is mine. This includes, but is not limited to, our time, the fruit of our labor, and our privacy.

Premise: #2 Walls exists to secure our private property thus our freedom, wellness, purpose, and security.

A. What is a wall and why are they important?

1. Wall – is a barrier that protects and keeps hidden what's inside from what is outside.
2. Walls have 2 primary purposes
 - 1. Protection
 - 2. Privacy
3. We are expert wall builders to keep in what is important to us and keep out the uninvited.
4. Walls can be visible or invisible and constructed out of all types of materials.
5. Walls maintain sovereignty.
6. In a fallen world, walls are necessary.

B. For those in a covenant relationship with God - GOD HAS OUR BACK. HE IS OUR WALL IN LIFE.

- Idolatry occurs when we reject God's role as our primary protector or provider and adopt another.
- Idolatry is a statement to God that says: God I know that you are trying to protect me, BUT I think I've found something that can do a better job
- When we make that statement to God, GOD TAKES ACTION.
 - He tries to persuade us
 - He warns us
 - He disciplines us
 - He leaves us into the hands of the idol (He turns us over and He lets go)
- This is the state that Israel found themselves in.

C. Israel's idolatry exposed them to attack and exile, their walls were reduced to rubble, and were in great need of revival.

D. VV 1 Nehemiah: Someone that God could use to make a difference.

- God is looking for someone who cares enough to make a difference when the walls of life are down.
- VV 2-4 Nehemiah receives news of the rubble back home and was driven to do something about it.

Lesson Notes:

1. VV4-11 Nehemiah used what he had to get to where he needed to be.
 - Nehemiah had great exposure to the King, but more importantly he had influence with the King of Kings.
 - Nehemiah prayed a prayer that sparked revival.
2. Nehemiah 2:1-8a Nehemiah's dangerous strategy to reach the king.
 - Four months went by and his opportunity came.
 - He cashed in his personal equity, in risk of his life.
 - How do you judge your equity?
 - You consistently, obviously do more than you are supposed to toward the goals of others.
 - You do what others can't or won't do to help achieve the goals of the groups' you are involved in.
 - You have something stellar on your record that resulted in an exponential result.
 - He didn't attempt to manipulate, but he didn't hide his feelings.
 - He spoke clearly and directly to the king about his issues.
 - He offered a clear proposal with a clear timeline.
3. Nehemiah **2:8b-9 The king granted** Nehemiah's request PLUS.
 1. The king granted Nehemiah's request.
 2. Plus, the king dispatched a security force to accompany Nehemiah to assure his safe return.
4. Nehemiah **2:10 although God and the King backed Nehemiah, there were some officials in the land that opposed.**
 - Whenever you attempt to do something big for the Lord, to benefit others, you **WILL FACE OPPOSITION!!!** (anticipate it)
 - The 2 types of opposition that you will face
 - Human
 - Direct – someone taking action that counters or blocks your efforts.
 - Critical – someone speaking negatively of your actions, which can have the effect of discouraging you, whether they mean to or not.
 - Cooperation – Not receiving adequate help to accomplish your task
 - Circumstantial – things not going your way.

- Nehemiah faced critical opposition from Sanballat and Tobiah.
 - They were actually upset that someone was trying to help.
 - Some people benefit from the victimization of others.
 - Although Sanballat and Tobiah were against Nehemiah's efforts, they had no authority to stop him. But they were free to criticize him.
-
- When facing opposition, your job is to:
 - Endure
 - Overcome

Questions:

1. From Sunday's Sermon, was there a particular point, comment, or scripture that caught your attention or challenged you?

2. Nehemiah used what he had to get to where he needed to be. If you were assigned to help someone rebuild the walls of a friend suffering from a debilitating addiction what resources do you possess that can get you to where you need to be?

3. Why was Nehemiah's strategy to ask the king's help to rebuild the walls in Jerusalem dangerous?

4. The people in Israel had many problems, why do you think that Nehemiah chose to rebuild the walls instead of something else?

5. What is personal equity? Why is it important? How do you establish it?

6. What lessons can you take away from Nehemiah's strategy with the king to help solve some of the problem that you may face on your job or in your family?

7. Pastor Rice stated in the message that whenever you attempt to do something big for the Lord, to benefit others, you **WILL FACE OPPOSITION**. Do you believe this? Have you experienced this? Why is it important to anticipate it?

8. What are the 2 types of opposition we face in ministry?

9. Define and discuss the 3 types of *human* opposition we face in ministry. Give examples.

10. What are the 2 things that we should do in the face of opposition. Give examples. How can you prepare now to be able to do these things when opposition comes?
