

Main Text: Nehemiah 2:10-20

¹⁰ When Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite ^[f]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 Then I arose in the night, I and a few men with me; I told no one what my God had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem; nor was there any animal with me, except the one on which I rode. ¹³ And I went out by night through the Valley Gate to the Serpent Well and the ^[g]Refuse Gate, and ^[h]viewed the walls of Jerusalem which were broken down and its gates which were burned with fire.

¹⁴ Then I went on to the Fountain Gate and to the King's Pool, but *there was* no room for the animal under me to pass.

¹⁵ So I went up in the night by the valley, ^[i] and ^[j]viewed the wall; then I turned back and entered by the Valley Gate, and so returned.

¹⁶ And the officials did not know where I had gone or what I had done; I had not yet

told the Jews, the priests, the nobles, the officials, or the others who did the work.

¹⁷ Then I said to them, "You see the distress that we *are* in, how Jerusalem *lies* ^[k]waste, and its gates are burned with fire. Come and let us build the wall of Jerusalem, that we may no longer be a reproach."

¹⁸ And I told them of the hand of my God which had been good upon me, and also of the king's words that he had spoken to me.

So they said, "Let us rise up and build." Then they set ^[l] their hands to *this* good work.

¹⁹ But when Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite official, and Geshem the Arab heard *of it*, they laughed at us and despised us, and said, "What *is* this thing that you are doing? Will you rebel against the king?"

²⁰ So I answered them, and said to them, "The God of heaven Himself will prosper us; therefore we His servants will arise and build, but you have no heritage or right or memorial in Jerusalem."

Review:

Premise:

1. Walls exist to secure our private property thus our freedom, wellness, purpose, and security.
 - a. Wall – is a barrier that protects and keeps hidden what is inside from what is outside.
 - b. Walls have 2 primary purposes
 - Protection
 - Privacy
 - c. In a fallen world walls are necessary
2. For those in covenant relationship with God - GOD HAS OUR BACK. HE IS OUR WALL IN LIFE.
 - a. Idolatry occurs when we reject God's role as our primary protector or provider and adopt another.
 - b. 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
 - c. When we make that statement to God, GOD TAKES ACTION:
 - i. He tries to persuade us
 - ii. He warns us
 - iii. He disciplines us
 - iv. He leaves us into the hands of the idol (He turns us over. He lets go.)
 - d. Israel found themselves immersed in Idolatry.
 - e. Israel's idolatry exposed them to attack and exile, their walls were reduced to rubble, and were in great need of revival.
3. VV 1 Nehemiah was someone that God could use to make a difference.
 - a. VV 2-4 Nehemiah receives news of the rubble back home and was driven to do something about it.
 - b. VV 4-11 Nehemiah used what he had to get to where he needed to be.
 - c. Nehemiah 2:1 Four months went by and his opportunity came.
 - d. Nehemiah cashed in his personal equity in risk of his life.
 - i. He didn't attempt to manipulate, but he didn't hide his feelings.
 - ii. He spoke clearly and directly to the king about his issues.
 - iii. He offered a clear proposal with a clear timeline.
 - e. Nehemiah 2:8b-9 The king granted Nehemiah's request PLUS the king dispatched a security force to accompany Nehemiah to assure his safe return.
 - f. Nehemiah 2:10 although God and the king backed Nehemiah there were some officials in the land that opposed.

- g. Whenever you attempt to do something big for the Lord to benefit others you WILL FACE OPPOSITION!!! (anticipate it)
- h. The 3 types of opposition that you will face.
 - i. Human
 - ii. Circumstantial – things not going your way.
- i. Nehemiah faced critical opposition from Sanballat and Tobiah.
- j. When facing opposition, your job is to **Endure** and **Overcome**.

Lesson Notes:

1. Nehemiah's strategy to rebuild the walls provide us with valuable tools for rebuilding the walls in our lives and the lives of others.
 - a. Wall building is a team sport. Therefore, you must develop tools that get others involved in what you are doing
2. VV11 Get to the location of service and chill a minute.

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

3. VV 12-16 Observe the issue that you are trying to address, assess it, and come to your own conclusions of what you must deal with.
 - a. Remember that the Lord is using you (as a leader), therefore, your assessment is critical because if the mission fails or succeeds it needs to do so based on your judgement.
 - b. As a leader, you will never have the luxury of blame.
 - c. Everyone sees things differently:
 - There may be no problem at all.
 - The problem may be much larger than reported.
 - The problem may be different than reported.
 - d. You need to develop the burden and the vision (solution) so you must experience the problem yourself.
 - e. It is best to observe the problem privately to maintain optimum objectivity.

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14 Then I went on to the Fountain Gate and to the King's Pool, but there was no room for the animal under me to pass.

15 So I went up in the night by the valley,^[i] and ^[j]viewed the wall; then I turned back and entered by the Valley Gate, and so returned.

16 And the officials did not know where I had gone or what I had done; I had not yet told the Jews, the priests, the nobles, the officials, or the others who did the work.

4. VV 17-18 Announce your findings, articulate your vision, and share your testimony only to those who will assist you.

a. Announce your findings-

b. Articulate you vision-

c. Share your testimony-

d. Only to those who will assist you-

17 Then I said to them, "You see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lies ^[k]waste, and its gates are burned with fire. Come and let us build the wall of Jerusalem, that we may no longer be a reproach."

18 And I told them of the hand of my God which had been good upon me, and also of the king's words that he had spoken to me.

So they said, "Let us rise up and build." Then they set^[1] their hands to this good work.

5. VV19-20 Ignore the criticism of your distractors, be confident in the Lord.

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²⁰ So I answered them, and said to them, "The God of heaven Himself will prosper us; therefore we His servants will arise and build, but you have no heritage or right or memorial in Jerusalem."

6. **Nehemiah 3 Get to work. Lead in the work. Delegate only when you come to the end of your abilities.**
 - a. Speed of the leader speed of the team.

Questions:

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

2. Why is it important to get to the ministry location and chill before beginning work?

3. Why is it important for a leader to make their own assessment of the situation before beginning work?

4. Why do you think that Nehemiah explored the walls at night by himself?

5. What is meant by the statement that "the leader doesn't have the luxury of blame"? Is this true? Why or why not?

6. Nehemiah utilized a 4 step vision casting process.
 - a. He announces his findings
 - b. Articulated his vision
 - c. Shares his testimony
 - d. Only to those who would assist him

Explain how each of these steps were important to his success in rebuilding the wall.

7. Why is it a useful tool to be able to ignore your distractors and be confident in the Lord? How do you develop this ability? How do you exercise this tool if the detractor is a friend or relative?

8. Why is important for a leader to work hard alongside of those that they are leading?
