

Character Study: Nehemiah

Part 1 – Nehemiah’s Vision

Nehemiah 1:1-2:6

What’s happening?

- Nehemiah served in the Persian court as the king’s cupbearer. This was a position of high honor and prestige. The fact that Nehemiah was selected for this position shows that he was a man of character, full of wisdom, and very trustworthy. (1:11)
- Nehemiah received word about the condition of Jerusalem following the Babylonian captivity. The city wall had been broken down and the city gates had been burned, and the people currently there were in great distress. (1:1-3)
- The news made Nehemiah weep for many days. He spent the time fasting and praying to God, confessing the sins of the people and pleading for God to be merciful. (1:4-11)
- Nehemiah’s sadness continued for four months. The king noticed his “sorrow of heart” and asked what was wrong. Nehemiah explained the pain he felt for his fellow Israelites in Jerusalem and boldly asked permission to return there to rebuild the city. The king willingly granted him his request. (2:1-6)

What’s God doing?

> God had allowed Judah to be taken captive by the Babylonians (in 586 BC) because of their persistent rebellion against Him. Because of God’s faithfulness, He allowed them to begin returning to Jerusalem. It was in 444 BC that Nehemiah made his return journey with the purpose of restoring the city.

What’s to learn?

→ Even in the opening section of this book, the leadership qualities of Nehemiah are apparent:

- When he saw a problem, He went straight to God in prayer.
- He had a vision and passion to fix the problem.
- He recognized what needed to be done, and had a plan of how to accomplish it.
- He looked for and recognized opportunities to act. He didn’t just have a burden to do something, he was willing to actually do it!

*Notice: Prayer → Vision → Strategy → Opportunity → Action

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