



**Title:** Facing Fear (Nehemiah: week 2)

**Text:** Nehemiah 2:1-8

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After hearing the report about how Jerusalem was in ruins, Nehemiah spent several months praying and asking God for favor and wisdom in the task of rebuilding the city. As chapter 2 begins, Nehemiah has the opportunity to bring his burden and request before the king. At the risk of great peril, Nehemiah faces his fear and boldly asks the king for everything but the kitchen sink. And, as we'll see, the good hand of God was upon Nehemiah and Artaxerxes shows him favor in his request.

### **Nehemiah 2:1-8**

*1 In the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was before him, I took up the wine and gave it to the king. Now I had not been sad in his presence. 2 And the king said to me, "Why is your face sad, seeing you are not sick? This is nothing but sadness of the heart." Then I was very much afraid.*

- **When you care deeply about something, it is hard to fake it. Nehemiah was obviously consumed with what God laid on his heart.**
- **We live in a culture of apathy. Nehemiah had a burden and cared about something about something bigger than himself.**

*3 I said to the king, "Let the king live forever! Why should not my face be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' graves, lies in ruins, and its gates have been destroyed by fire?" 4 Then the king said to me, "What are you requesting?" So I prayed to the God of heaven.*

- **Nehemiah's quick prayer after several months of prayer reminds us of the informality and relationship of prayer. We should pray to God as a young child speaks to his father.**

*5 And I said to the king, "If it pleases the king, and if your servant has found favor in your sight, that you send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers' graves, that I may rebuild it." 6 And the king said to me ( the queen sitting beside him), "How long will you be gone, and when will you return?" So it pleased the king to send me when I had given him a time.*

- **This took great boldness! Nehemiah essentially asked Artaxerxes to reverse his foreign policy that he declared in Ezra 4:7-23.**

*7 And I said to the king, "If it pleases the king, let letters be given me to the governors of the province Beyond the River, that they may let me pass through until I come to Judah, 8 and a letter to Asaph, the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the fortress of the temple, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall occupy." And the king granted me what I asked, for the good hand of my God was upon me.*

- **Nehemiah was ready when asked! All total in this short exchange he asked for diplomatic immunity, open credit at the king's building supply store, and a free house. In the span of a few minutes Nehemiah goes from being very afraid to bold leader who's burden for God's city overpowers his fear.**

What we can learn from Nehemiah's request:

1. His burden was bigger than his fear.
2. His prayer was simple.
3. He combined both prayer and planning.

Our Plan:

1. Pray
2. Preach Jesus from the Scriptures
3. Think missional
4. Insist on biblical community
5. Find a more permanent place
6. Add to ministry staff