

NEHEMIAH - CHAPTER 2

NOTES FROM LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION

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V1-2. A CUP OF SADNESS

- WE ENDED CHAPTER 1 LEARNING THAT NEHEMIAH WAS CUPBEARER FOR KING ARTAXERXES
 - KING ARTAXERXES WAS KNOWN BY THE NICKNAME "LONGIMANUS"
 - HIS RIGHT HAND WAS SIGNIFICANTLY LONGER THAN HIS LEFT, AND PICTURES OFTEN DEPICT IT LOOKING LAME OR LARGER
- WHEN: 4 MONTHS (16 WEEKS) LATER AS THE KING IS ABOUT TO HAVE A DRINK OF WINE
- HIS SADNESS OF HEART HAS GROWN FROM THE INSIDE OUT, AND IS NOW VISIBLE EVEN THOUGH HE HAD TRIED HARD NOT TO LET IT BE SEEN
- BEING SAD, OR MOURNING, IN THE PRESENCE OF THE KING WAS FORBIDDEN AND PUNISHABLE BY DEATH (REMEMBER THE TIME OF ESTHER 4:16)

V3. REAL FEAR AND REAL COURAGE

- EVEN THOUGH HE WAS AFRAID, HE FOUND COURAGE TO SPEAK.
- HE BEGINS PROCLAIMING FAVOR FOR THE KING, AND BY PROPOSING A QUESTION.
- SOMETIMES ALL WE NEED IS JUST A FEW MOMENTS OF HUMAN COURAGE MOTIVATED BY THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD TO BRIDGE A CALLING INTO A GREAT WORK OF THE LORD.
 - MOST REPEATED COMMAND IN THE BIBLE? DO NOT FEAR.
 - GOD WILL ASK US ALL TO DO SOMETHING WE DON'T WANT TO DO.
 - FEAR CAN BE A GREAT INDICATOR THAT MAY BE EXACTLY WHAT GOD WANTS YOU TO DO
 - CONFRONT THE THING YOU FEAR *What do you fear?*

V4-6. A PRAYER AND A PLAN

- HE PAUSES TO PRAY-MID CONVERSATION BEFORE ANSWERING THE KING
 - THIS IS THE FIRST OF 8 TIMES IT IS RECORDED THAT HE PRAYS SPONTANEOUSLY
 - *What do you want the favor of God to rest on?*
 - *When you are paralyzed by fear, do you pause and pray?*
 - *Ask big things of God! John Newton: "Come My Soul, With Every Care"*
- HE ANSWERS AGAIN DECLARING GOOD NOT HARM FOR THE KING
- WE SEE A GLIMPSE OF THE QUEEN
- THE KING INQUIRES OF THE TIMEFRAME AND HIS RETURN, THEY ESTABLISH A TIMELINE
 - WE LEARN LATER ON THAT HE WOULD BE GONE FOR 12 WEEKS
- GOD IS A GOD WHO PLANS
 - HE DIDN'T HAPHAZARDLY CREATE THE WORLD
 - HE DIDN'T SEND US HERE WITHOUT A PLAN OF REDEMPTION
 - HE WEAVES LIVES INTRICATELY INTO A DESIGN PART OF A GRANDER DESIGN FOR HIS GLORY AND OUR GOOD
 - WE PROBABLY DISCOUNT A GREAT DEAL OF GODLY PLANNING AS CONTROL

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- WE NEED TO SEE THE HEART BEHIND OUR PLANNING
 - THERE IS SUCH THING AS GODLY PLANNING-GOD HONORS A PLAN
 - THERE IS SUCH THING AS PLANNING GRASPING FOR CONTROL
- NEHEMIAH ESTABLISHED HIS PLANS IN PRAYER

V7-9. DETAILS AND FAVOR

- AFTER RECEIVING THE BLESSING TO GO, HE ASKS FOR RESOURCES
 - ASKING GOD'S PEOPLE FOR RESOURCES TO DO GOD'S WORK IS OK
- HE ASKS FOR LETTERS TO PROTECT HIM ON HIS JOURNEY
- HE ASKS FOR WOOD TO REBUILD THE GATES AND BUILD HIS HOUSE
 - HE DID RESEARCH TO KNOW WHO TO ASK AND WHAT HE WOULD NEED
 - THIS WASN'T MANIPULATIVE, IT WAS GODLY PLANNING
 - CLEARLY LED AND MOVED BY THE HAND OF GOD-THROUGH PRAYER
- THE KING GRANTED, BUT NEHEMIAH KNEW IT WAS ULTIMATELY THE HAND OF GOD
- THE KING ALSO SENT HIM WITH CALVARY AND OFFICERS FOR PROTECTION

V10. OPPOSITION FROM THE START

- WHENEVER YOU BEGIN TO DO WORK FOR THE LORD, YOU CAN EXPECT OPPOSITION
- EVEN FROM THE INSIDE OR UNEXPECTED PLACES
- A REBUILT JERUSALEM MEANT A THREAT TO THE SECURE POSITIONS THESE MEN HELD
- AS THE NUMBERS INCREASED, THE OPPOSITION DID TOO
- NEHEMIAH HAD A RESPECTABLE POSITION AND THE FAVOR OF THE KING-THEY KNEW HE COULD ACCOMPLISH A GREAT WORK
 - *Expect opposition- don't be surprised or caught off guard by it.*
 - *IF you have not known opposition, there is greater work for you to do.*
 - *If our eyes are fixed on ourselves, we may never know the satisfaction of partnering with God in His redemptive work or the opposition it brings.*

V11-16. SIMPLE OBEDIENCE AND THOUGHTFUL OBSERVATIONS

- HE WENT. HE ARRIVED. SIMPLE OBEDIENCE. UNCOMPLICATED (1,500 MILE JOURNEY)
- HE RESTED AND THEN GAVE THE PROJECT THOUGHTFUL CONSIDERATION BEFORE HE BEGAN
- THEY SURVEYED THE WALL AT NIGHT TO NOT DRAW ATTENTION OR CREATE RIVALRY
- THE WALL WAS SO BROKEN DOWN ONE HORSE COULDN'T GET THROUGH

V17-18. A VISION PLANTED IN GOD'S TIMING

- HE WAITED TO SHARE A VISION, WITH A PLAN, PROCLAIMING GOD'S FAVOR
 - *Spiritual renewal often begins with one person's enthusiastic vision*
 - *When God plants an idea-share it and trust the Holy Spirit to dynamically work!*
 - *God often uses one person to cast vision, and others to accomplish it.*

V19-20. OPPOSITION ARISES AND GROWS

- THE LORD WILL GIVE US SUCCESS. WE WILL REBUILD.
- HUMAN ANTICLIMAX BEGINS..... YOU DO NOT BELONG HERE!