The Rebuilt Life
Studies in Nehemiah

Session 2 – Nehemiah's Preparation | Nehemiah Chapter 2

Nehemiah's plea for God's help became a burden to rebuild. He surveyed the problem—first on his knees in prayer and eventually on a moonlit ride over broken and neglected borders.

Goals for this Session:

- Discover the vital connection between prayer and preparation.
- Consider the needs and opportunities God is putting in front of you.
- Pray honest prayers that risk much and rely on God's Spirit to accomplish.

Ice Breaker

If you have ever taken on a "fixer-upper" project or restored an old car, what was your reason for doing so? Did you finish it? Describe the challenges and rewards.

Favor with the King

Nehemiah 2:1–10
After four long months, Nehemiah gets the opening he's been praying for and makes his request to the king.

1. Nehemiah prayed for success and favor with the king (Nehemiah 1:11). In what ways did God clearly answer his prayer in chapter 2:1–10? List what you observe from the text.

Good to Know

Nehemiah risked losing his position and even his life with this request.

Years earlier, it was Artaxerxes who halted the project to rebuild the city walls after a petition from locals accused the Jews of planning to incite a rebellion (Ezra 4:9–23).

2. What does Nehemiah's detailed request indicate he did during those months of waiting and praying?

   a. Give some thought to the connection between prayer and planning. Explain why both are essential for following through on any endeavor to serve the Lord.

3. "The good hand of my God was upon me." Did Nehemiah just happen to be in the right place at the right time? In a way, yes—and no. What can the person who prays and actively looks for God to open doors be certain of? Consider each verse and answer in your own words.

   Proverbs 21:1

   Proverbs 16:9

   Zechariah 4:6

   James 1:5

   John 15:4–5

4. Nehemiah was finally headed on the 800-mile journey to Jerusalem with the king's approval and provision. What types of challenges did he encounter along the way? From what you can tell, how did he respond?

   a. Can you recall a time when you faced hardship or opposition for pursuing the Lord's will? Share how it challenged and/or strengthened your resolve.

Memory Verse
As you memorize this verse, make it part of your prayers every day. Ask the Holy Spirit to work it into your heart and mind.

"Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit," says the Lord of hosts.
Zechariah 4:6 NKJV

Think About It . . .

Answering God's call to action frequently requires venturing out of our comfort zone. Nehemiah was willing to dream big and work at full capacity, but he knew it wouldn't be enough without an outpouring of God's Spirit. What are you praying for that only God can accomplish?

Surveying the Need

Nehemiah 2:11–20
Nehemiah's late-night inspection confirmed the magnitude of need he had been praying about for months. Were the needed repairs worse than he expected? Possibly. Did he recognize that the work would tax the limit of his skills and abilities? Certainly. Did he scale back the plan while it remained just between him and God? Clearly not.

1. Nehemiah surveyed the ruins for himself first, before saying anything. Was he simply on a fact-finding mission? How would you explain the timing and purpose of his night ride?

    a. Nehemiah took a "few men" with him to examine the actual condition of the wall. Before sharing his mission with the community, Nehemiah trusted these few to survey the need and go the distance with him. Think about it. How important is it to be part of a trusted circle of friends who will encourage, advise, pray, and go the distance for each other?

2. "You see the trouble we are in." The people in Jerusalem were so used to living with broken walls that they no longer seemed to see them. Earlier attempts to repair the wall were opposed and they quit, discouraged. How did Nehemiah motivate them?

3. Nehemiah was moved with compassion to do something. It's easier to tell someone what to do about a problem than it is to go stand with them in their trouble. What do the following scriptures have to say about it? Answer in your own words.

   Galatians 6:2

   Hebrews 10:23–25

   Romans 12:9–13, 15

   Colossians 3:12–17

4. Does Nehemiah's example motivate you to action? In what way? Retrace Nehemiah's steps and consider how to apply them.

   a. He surveyed the need. What needs do you see?

   b. He came up with a plan. What will you do to begin?

   c. He enlisted others. Who will you ask to pray, and go the distance with you?

"When you wait on the Lord in prayer, you are not wasting your time; you're investing it. God is preparing you. However, when the right time arrives for us to act by faith, we dare not delay."

Warren Wiersbe
Be Determined

Gospel at a Glance: The Messiah | Nehemiah marked the date in his journal when he was authorized to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem as Nisan (March/April) in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes' reign (445 BC); A notable date for Nehemiah, but greater significance in history. Many years earlier, Daniel prophesied that when the order is given to restore and build Jerusalem, it would be sixty-nine "weeks" (483 years) until Messiah would come and be "cut off" (Daniel 9:25–26). Using the ancient calendar, the end of sixty-nine weeks coincides perfectly with the date of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem and His crucifixion.[1]

[1] See notes on Daniel 9:26 taken from *The Nelson Study Bible*, ©1997 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission.

Adoration **C**onfession **T**hankfulness **S**upplication

"Pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people." Ephesians 6:18 NIV

God sparked Nehemiah to pray and take action. Others joined in and the work began. With God's blessing, power, and protection, the wall was rebuilt. In each session, we will take time to pray—for others and for ourselves, for our church, our communities, and our nation.

As a focus for prayer, you can use the memory verse, another scripture, or simply what the Lord has impressed on you from the chapter. No need to be profound or elaborate, just authentic.

Record your simple prayer, including each element here.

A _____

C _____

T _____

S _____

Group Prayer Requests

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