

14 June

 Break the ice

Write down what God is saying to you in today's message:

TOPIC: Nehemiah Chapter 2

 Let's hear your story

1. Why was Nehemiah sad in the presence of the king? (see v.3)
2. List three requests of Nehemiah to the king in verses 4 – 8? (Send by the king; letters to governors; timber for material).
3. According to verse 9; who did the king also send to go with Nehemiah? (Captains of the army and horsemen).
4. What were the names of Nehemiah's two enemies? (see v.10 - Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite).

 Let's go deeper

5. What did Nehemiah do; the first three days after arriving in Jerusalem? (see verse 11 – 16; he inspected and studied the walls)
6. After inspecting the walls who did Nehemiah meet with? (see verse 17 – he called the leaders of Jerusalem for a meeting).
7. How did the leaders respond to Nehemiah? (see verse 18 - they said, "Let us rise up and build." Then they set their hands to this good work).
8. How did Sanballat; Tobiah and Geshem the Arab respond when they heard of the rebuilding? (see verse 19 – they laughed and despised Nehemiah).

 Let's apply this

9. In the same way as Nehemiah was sent and commissioned by the king of Persia; king Artaxerxes; we are sent and commissioned by the King of kings and Lord of lords; King Jesus.

And like Nehemiah; God has given us a plan to build His Kingdom:

God's plan for us: To know Jesus Christ and to make Him known

- The great commandment (Matthew 22:36 – 40), and,
The great commission (Matthew 28:18 – 20).

And as in the days of Nehemiah 2:17, let us rise up and build.

SUMMARY:

Read: Nehemiah 2:1 – 20; Psalms 33:11; Proverbs 21:5

- The book of Nehemiah chapter 2:

v.1; Nehemiah was the king's cupbearer; a significant position in any ancient royal court. The cupbearer was a personal bodyguard to the king, the one who tasted wine and food before the king did – making sure no one could poison the king.

v.2; It was forbidden to be sad in the presence of the king. When Nehemiah looked sad, it could have been taken as a terrible insult to the king and the king was in a position to say "off with his head."

v.3; Nehemiah explain why he was sad. He tells of his concern without mentioning the name of the city. The king would have a bad association with the name "Jerusalem," knowing from history it was a city rebellious against the Persians and resistant to their rule. He gets the sympathy of the king, before he reveals the city!

v.4 – 8; Nehemiah had a plan: He knew how long he would need to be gone (I set him a time). He knew he would need letters of safe passage from the king (let letters be given to me). He knew what kind of materials would be needed (timber). He knew what work needed to be done (the gates of the citadel... the city wall... the house I will occupy). He knew all of this without seeing the condition of Jerusalem!

v.9 – 10; Nehemiah came prepared. He had letters showing he was truly sent by the king. He had captains of the army and horsemen with him. He had supplies of lumber from the king's forest. The king of Persia responded to Nehemiah's invitation to become a partner in the work of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem. Sanballat the Horonite... Tobiah the Ammonite: Nehemiah met these two enemies of Jerusalem. They were disturbed that a man had come to seek the well-being of the children of Israel.

v.11 – 16; Nehemiah inspects and studies the broken walls of Jerusalem.

v.17 – 18; Nehemiah meets with the leaders of Jerusalem and asked them to notice the distress. He didn't blame or criticize the leaders. He asked for their partnership. Nehemiah pointed them to the result: that we may no longer be a reproach. This wasn't really about bricks and mortar; it was about removing a condition of shame, fear, poverty and insecurity among God's people. He encouraged them. He assured the leaders this was God's project, and he gave them confidence by telling of what God had already done. He didn't beg or offer rewards. The leaders responded with: "let us rise up and build." The people were influenced by his leadership.

v.19; These men were Jews; fellow brothers of Nehemiah and citizens of Jerusalem. Sanballat and Tobiah wanted Nehemiah to feel mocked, stupid, and foolish.

v.20; This opposition did not immediately stop. These two opposed the work all the way until it was finished. But they didn't stop it. God's work got done.