

Lesson 3, NEHEMIAH 2

In the last lesson, we left Nehemiah in Susa (Persia) serving as the cup bearer to King Artaxerxes. This role was one of complete trust since he tested the wine to make sure it was not poison before the king drank it. Nehemiah was uniquely positioned to accomplish powerful work for God's people and his holy city of Jerusalem.

1. Nehemiah received word about the trouble in Jerusalem in the month of Kislev which is our November/December. However, he does not approach the king until the month of Nisan, our March/April. Why do you think he waited to present his requests? See Psalm 27:13,14, and Psalm 40:1-3.

2. What does Nehemiah ask of the king? How does Nehemiah refer to Jerusalem? Why do you think the queen's presence was mentioned? See Esther 1:1-2; 2:5-7, 17; 4:12-14. If the queen was Esther or possibly her daughter in law, how would this affect the receptiveness of the king towards Nehemiah's request? What does this tell you about the influence we have on future generations as we make a stand for God?

3. Read Nehemiah 2:11-12. What do you think was the purpose of Nehemiah's going alone (without the Jewish leaders) in the dark of night to examine the walls? See Lamentations 3:40 and 2 Corinthians 13:5.

4. Finally, in Nehemiah 2:17-18, he reveals to the leaders of Jerusalem his purpose. Notice he first acknowledges the problem, then calls them to labor with him to accomplish their task, then encourages them with the assurance of God's hand and the king's provisions. Is there an area in your life where you need to repair a wall? Read Isaiah 40:28-31 and Matthew 11:28-30.

5. When we commit to repairing a part of our lives either physically or spiritually, we will face enemies. Read Nehemiah 2:19-20. Who does Nehemiah rely upon? He is also asserting that the enemy has no claim to Jerusalem. This can translate that the Enemy has no claim to any Christian. Read 2 Corinthians 12:7-10. How can you apply this to your life? To the lives of loved ones?

Application: Examining our lives is important but realizing we have the power to change is vital. Write out Romans 8:31-34 and substitute your name where you see the pronoun “us”.

Prayer: Father of all mercies and grace, your word says, “Now the Lord is the Spirit , and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.” (2 Corinthians 3:17). As we identify and examine areas in our lives that need repair, help us to have faith in your ability to set us free. It is in the name of Jesus our Lord we pray. Amen.