



Leading with Insight  
Nehemiah 8:13-18  
April 22, 2018

**Introduction:**

The Book of Nehemiah can be divided into two main sections. In the first six chapters, there is a reconstruction of a wall; in the last seven, there is a reinstruction of the people who built that wall. The first six chapters tell the story of a dominant character (Nehemiah) who was the builder and superintendent over the job and ultimately became governor over the people of Jerusalem. But in the last seven chapters, the leadership shifts to Ezra who was a priest and scribe. Consequently, one central theme runs throughout the book. That theme is leadership and how God used one person to motivate, encourage, and give hope when there was no hope to be found.

**I. Proper Leadership Produces Proper Insight**

*Nehemiah 8:9-12 (NKJV) And Nehemiah, who was the governor, Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, "This day is holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn nor weep. For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the Law. <sup>10</sup>Then he said to them, "Go your way, eat the fat, drink the sweet, and send portions to those for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy to our LORD. Do not sorrow, for the joy of the LORD is your strength." <sup>11</sup>So the Levites quieted all the people, saying, "Be still, for the day is holy; do not be grieved." <sup>12</sup>And all the people went their way to eat and drink, to send portions and rejoice greatly because they understood the words that were declared to them.*

*Nehemiah 8:13 (NASB) Then on the second day the heads of fathers' households of all the people, the priests, and the Levites were gathered to Ezra the scribe that they might gain insight into the words of the law.*

**Takeaway:**

"Insight" is an essential trait for leaders. A leader must be able to see the big picture, to project into the tomorrows of any undertaking, to visualize the outworking of a plan. No leader can stay riveted to today. He must see the results of his "now" ahead of time.

**Homer Lindsay Jr.**

"It takes five years to become the pastor of the congregation you are called to shepherd. Now, they will put your name on the sign the same day you arrive, but rest assured you are the pastor in name only. It takes five years for the average guy to earn the respect of the people in order to be called their pastor."

**II. Proper Leadership Pursues Proper Insight**

Three specifics about gaining proper insight:

**1. It takes time**

*Psalm 119:100 (NASB) I understand more than the aged because I have observed your precepts.*

2. It takes the right people

*Nehemiah 8:13 (NKJV) Now on the second day the heads of the fathers' houses of all the people, with the priests and Levites, were gathered to Ezra the scribe, in order to understand the words of the Law.*

What Ezra was to Nehemiah, Bro. Fred was to me. For almost four years, Bro. Fred was my Ezra. He not only taught me how to live the Christian life, he also taught me how to deal with people, especially difficult people. Bro. Fred had the uncanny ability to take a potentially bad situation and spin it around for me to be able to see the good side of a bad situation. Without doubt, I was the most blessed man in the entire state to have him on my staff and by my side. I will never be a Bro. Fred, because men of his stature are not replaced, but I will die practicing the many things that he taught me in life and ministry.

3. It takes the right attitude

*Nehemiah 8:13 (NKJV) Now on the second day the heads of the fathers' houses of all the people, with the priests and Levites, were gathered to Ezra the scribe, in order to understand the words of the Law.*

My pastoral observation through the years:

I have seen men and women attend church, leadership meetings, and other gatherings, and it absolutely does nothing for them. In fact, many times it turns them off while many others cannot seem to get enough. What is the difference? Attitude! One has a teachable spirit, and one does not. One looks for reasons to attend a leadership meeting, and another looks for reasons to miss them. What is the difference? Attitude - a teachable spirit, an insatiable desire, and drive to take full advantage of every opportunity they have. Consequently, I have learned that when it comes to my staff, I look for men and women who are hungry for attitude, because a hungry person will do whatever it takes to be fed, while a passive person will complain while food is actually in their same room.

III. Proper Leadership Practices Proper Insight

Two things always happen when we practice divine truth:

1. We walk in obedience to Jesus
2. We discover real joy in Jesus

Takeaway:

When God gives you insight (not just knowledge), you say, "Lord, take over. Nothing in my life is private. Here are the keys to my life." Total, unreserved obedience comes as a result of gaining insight.

*Nehemiah 8:17 (NKJV) So the whole assembly of those who had returned from the captivity made booths and sat under the booths; for since the days of Joshua the son of Nun until that day the children of Israel had not done so. In addition, there was very great gladness.*

Principle: I cannot explain how it happens, but all I know is that every time you obey God, it will eventually bring you joy, but every time you disobey God, it will eventually bring you grief.