

Let's Worship God

17th-22nd June 2019
Nehemiah





Monday - Nehemiah 2:6-10 - The Plan

Not only was Nehemiah a man who had great faith he was also a man of great wisdom and practicality. When the king asked him about his journey he considered all that would be necessary to make his journey successful. He was able to tell the king how long he would need and also to ensure that he would be able to arrive safely. There could well have been difficulties passing through the various provinces on the other side of the river Euphrates, so Nehemiah asked for letters from the king that would gain his safe passage. If he was going to do a work of rebuilding he would obviously need sufficient building materials, and so he fearlessly asked the king to provide them, and such was evidence of the hand of God upon him that the king granted all his requests.

It is quite clear that Nehemiah had a plan! This is, of course a reflection of the way in which God works; God is a planning God. Psalm 33:11. This is seen pre-eminently in the divine plan for the salvation of the elect. God made his choice of his people in eternity, planned the coming and work of Christ to the last detail, and continues to execute his plan in the salvation of sinners.

The plans that we make may not always be wise or feasible, and our plans may not always come to fruition. It is also true that God does sometimes bless in spite of a lack of planning on our part, nevertheless God does work through planning - if not ours, then His. 'Faith is no substitute for planning. We aren't more spiritual for failing to plan and for shooting from the hip. There may be sometimes when we simply can't plan, but we should never reject planning. Proverbs 21:5.' (David Guzik).

Questions

1. What did Nehemiah ask for?
2. How do we know that God plans things?

Prayer Points

1. Give thanks for God's plan of salvation.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

"The God of heaven will make us prosper, and we His servants will arise and build, but you have no portion or right or claim in Jerusalem." Nehemiah 2:20b

Praise: Psalm 120 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.



Tuesday - Ephesians 6:10-17 - Worrying the Enemy

Nehemiah had spent much time in prayer and planning. He had skillfully worked out everything that needed to be done, but the crucial thing is seen in the three little words, 'so I went' 2:9. It is possible for us to be concerned, to pray and to have a vision for what needs to be done, but stop short of actually doing what needs to be done. It is easy to talk about working for God, planning evangelistic strategies, even praying for them to be successful, but to do nothing. Although prayer and planning are absolutely vital, it is especially when we begin to do something that the enemy of souls begins to take notice.

It was when Nehemiah began to take action to put his plan into operation that he began to experience opposition. 'When Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite official heard about it, it was very displeasing to them that someone had come to seek the welfare of the sons of Israel'. 2:10. Before Nehemiah appeared on the scene in Jerusalem the Temple was there and worship was taking place, but it seems that there was little to concern those who opposed the cause of God and truth. It was only when somebody arrived who was seeking the welfare of the 'sons of Israel' that the opponents began to be concerned.

It is not the mere existence of the professing church of Christ that is of concern to the evil one, it is not just that believers plan to reach out into their communities with the gospel, it is not even just when believers pray, it is when vision, planning, and prayer are translated into action that the devil begins to get worried! When believers have a genuine concern for the cause of Christ and are willing to sacrifice themselves to seek the welfare of God's church and the extension of the kingdom of Christ, they may expect that opposition will arise to seek to hinder the work.

Questions

1. When did Nehemiah experience opposition?
2. Who is our enemy?

Prayer Points

1. Pray that the Lord would protect us from our enemies.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

“The God of heaven will make us prosper, and we His servants will arise and build, but you have no portion or right or claim in Jerusalem.” Nehemiah 2:20b

Praise: Psalm 121 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.



Wednesday - Nehemiah 2:11-16 - Seeing What's Wrong

When Nehemiah arrived in Jerusalem he did not immediately call together the leaders of the people to discuss what he had come to do. His work began quietly and secretly. He did not seek to call a press conference and announce some great plan of rebuilding and seek for funding from all and sundry, he went out at night with a few trusted men to see for himself exactly what state the walls of the city were in. As he walked around the city from west anti-clockwise he was carefully inspecting (the word 'viewed' means "probing a wound to see the extent of the damage") everything so that he would know exactly how much work there was to be done.

There was much that was good in Jerusalem, and Nehemiah could have just focused on that. The people were back in Judah and, the exile was over, the temple was built, sacrifice and worship were being conducted. There was much to be thankful for in Jerusalem - but sometimes it is necessary see what is wrong, and that is what Nehemiah did.

There are, unfortunately some within the church who only see what is wrong, but that is not the message from Nehemiah; we must, like Nehemiah, look at the broken down towers, and carefully study what is wrong - but only if we have the heart, the prayer, the vision and the passion to be used of God to put it right. Alan Redpath put it very well when he said, "It is utter folly to refuse to believe that things are as bad as they really are. It is vital in any undertaking for God to know the worst, for whenever there is to be a wonderful movement of the Holy Spirit, it begins with someone like Nehemiah who was bold enough to look at facts, to diagnose them, and then to rise to the task."

Questions

1. What did Nehemiah do when he arrived?
2. Is it enough to just notice what is wrong?

Prayer Points

1. Pray that we would have a heart to put things right.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

"The God of heaven will make us prosper, and we His servants will arise and build, but you have no portion or right or claim in Jerusalem." Nehemiah 2:20b

Praise: Psalm 122 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.



Thursday - Nehemiah 2:17-20 - Putting Our Hand to the Work

When Nehemiah had seen the situation and had made a realistic assessment, he then turned to the leaders of the people to make them aware of the situation. In his approach, Nehemiah demonstrated great wisdom:

a. He did not blame the leaders of the people for sitting around for decades simply accepting that nothing could be done. He pointed out what was clearly evident to them 'you see the bad situation we are in'.

b. He asked for their help and support, 'Come let us rebuild'. This was not to be something that Nehemiah was going to do, this was a joint project for the people of God.

c. He gave a clear reason for the rebuilding - 'so that we will no longer be a reproach'. God's name, cause, and people were being despised, and just like David when he heard the taunts of Goliath 1 Sam. 17:26, Nehemiah wanted to remove the reproach and honour God.

d. He encouraged them by telling them of how God had blessed him and made the heathen king support the rebuilding project.

The response of the people was immediate and positive. Not only did they say that they would 'arise and build' they actively 'put their hands to the good work'. The church of Jesus Christ has a similar task to that facing Nehemiah - there has been so much devastation caused within the professing church by laxity in doctrine, discipline, and practice, and it is very easy to simply believe that it how it is always going to be. Like Nehemiah, we need to make a realistic assessment, realise that it is a work for all of God's people, acknowledge that it is the glory and honour of God that is at stake, trust in the God who has been so good to us in the past, and be determined to 'to put (our) hands to the good work'.

Questions

1. How did Nehemiah approach the leaders?
2. How did they respond?

Prayer Points

1. Pray that we would put our hand to the work.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

“The God of heaven will make us prosper, and we His servants will arise and build, but you have no portion or right or claim in Jerusalem.” Nehemiah 2:20b

Praise: Psalm 123 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

NEHEMIAH

pray | plan | build

Friday - Ephesians 6:10-20 - Enemies

No sooner had the officials and the people 'put their hands to the good work' than the opposition arose. It should be no surprise that as soon as God's people begin to be enthusiastic about working for God the devil will stir up his agents to oppose it!

The opposition to Nehemiah came from the very same people who had been so displeased that 'someone had come to seek the welfare of the sons of Israel' 2:10. Tobiah appears to have been a man of influence 13:4. The name "Tobiah" means "Yahweh is good" - a strange name for a man who was an opponent of the work of God. His companion, Sanballat was connected by marriage to priestly families 13:28. He was also an influential man, described in one ancient document from this period as "governor of Samaria."

It was no doubt disappointing for Nehemiah and the Jewish leaders to get opposition from within their own community, but it is often the case that those who are quite satisfied with the status quo will seek to resist those who want to do something for God, and they will often use the same tactics used by Tobiah and Sanballat, mockery and derision. Their statement, 'what is this thing you are doing?' suggests that it was a foolish enterprise and bound to fail, and they further sought to suggest that they were in danger of incurring the anger of the king.

Mockery, misinformation, and lies are often part of the strategy of those who would oppose anything that would advance the cause of Christ. The believer is engaged in a spiritual warfare and is being opposed by the father of lies who, from the very beginning has tried to undermine the confidence of the people of God in the Word and will of God 'Indeed, has God said...?' Gen. 3. The child of God must respond as Nehemiah did.

Questions

1. Who opposed the work?
2. How did they do it?

Prayer Points

1. Pray for perseverance in fighting the spiritual war.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

"The God of heaven will make us prosper, and we His servants will arise and build, but you have no portion or right or claim in Jerusalem." Nehemiah 2:20b

Praise: Psalm 124 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.



Saturday - Acts 5:17-32 - A Higher Authority

It is interesting that Nehemiah did not seek to answer the accusations of Tobiah and Sanballat by explaining exactly how he was going to carry out the proposed work or to show them the letter that he had received from the king authorising him to do the work. Rather than engage in fruitless discussion Nehemiah made confident and striking statements:

a. 'The God of heaven will give us success'. Here is an amazing avowal of confidence in God. Nehemiah knew that he had been sent by God to do God's work, and the feeble mockery and threats of a couple of self-important officials was not going to deter him. It is the same confidence shown by the apostles in Acts 5:29 'We must obey God rather than men'.

b. 'We his servants will arise and build'. Tobiah and Sanballat may have thought that they were on solid ground in their opposition because they were the servants of the king. Nehemiah does not correct their misapprehension but appeals to a much higher authority - they are the servants of the God of heaven and are doing his work. When God authorises his servants to work, there is not a power on earth that can prevent them.

c. 'You have no portion, right or memorial in Jerusalem' Nehemiah was declaring with great boldness that he was building the city of God where His name would be honoured and glorified, and that those who opposed the work had no place in it. This is a solemn message for those within the professing church of Christ who constantly criticise and seek to hold back spiritual growth and outreach. Like Tobiah and Sanballat they may reside within the organised church as they did in Jerusalem, but they have no real part or lot in it.

Questions

1. What authority does Nehemiah appeal to?
2. What is the warning for those in the church?

Prayer Points

1. Pray for the preaching and hearing of God's Word tomorrow.
2. Use prayer points from your congregation.
3. Pray for family matters.

Memory Verse

"The God of heaven will make us prosper, and we His servants will arise and build, but you have no portion or right or claim in Jerusalem." Nehemiah 2:20b

Praise: Psalm 125 - See www.rpglobalalliance.org for Psalm tune helps.

The goal of Let's Worship God is to encourage and help you in your worship of God each day.

**God tells us that
Ezra read from
the book of the Law
day after day
and that
the people of God
were filled with joy!**

Let's Worship God is produced for the RP Global Alliance
by the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

If you have any queries please contact - admin@rpglobalalliance.org