

March 21, 2010

THE CHALLENGE OF REVIVAL  
NEHEMIAH 2:1-20

Nehemiah is a book about change and opposition to God's work. It's about revival in Jerusalem. The place – Shushan capital of Persia, the penalty for idol worship – captivity and destruction, the passion – wept, mourned, fasted, prayed, the prayer – Nehemiah was willing to pay the price and face the challenge because he was dedicated and godly. He was burdened over Jerusalem, and could not keep silent and remain uninvolved.

- I. REGISTER THE REQUEST (VS. 1-10). Nehemiah had mourned, fasted, and prayed for four months. It is only the man or woman with the heavy burden that God can trust with His work.
  - A. He was given the king's power (v. 7) – his letter of approval.
  - B. He was given the king's provision (v.8) – timber for the task ahead.
  - C. He was given the king's protection (v. 9) – the calvary patrol.

Lord send me – use me as your agent of revival to rebuild.

- II. REVIEW THE RUINS (vs. 11-16). While other slept, Nehemiah with a burdened heart, spent three days reviewing the ruins. Whenever a real work of God is about to be done, some faithful, burdened servant has to weep in the night over the ruins, and wrestle in some dark Gethsemane in prayer.
  - A. He reviewed the ruins patiently (vs. 12-16). The broken down walls were a shame. The burned gates to the Holy City of God was a joke to a heathen world.
  - B. He reviewed the ruins persistently. He saw things as they really were. We need to call sin – sin, and face the facts. How do we measure up to Jesus? In the spiritual walls of our hearts, do we have strained relationships, lovelessness, robbing God, lack of prayer, too little or no fruit, no commitment or little commitment?
  - C. He reviewed the ruins privately (v.16). He had no desire to be the center of attention. He was interested only in revival - building the walls and gates. Review the ruins – do our lives honor Jesus?

- III. REMOVE THE REPROACH (vs. 17-20). This involves:

- A. The call (v.17) “come let us rebuild” that we be no more a reproach. Broken down walls invite attacks from the enemy. God's calling today

to rebuild personally, corporately, and no longer be a reproach to God.

- B. The calling (v. 8 & v. 18) “the good hand of God was upon him.” When born again, we all have a special calling. We must acknowledge His calling as agents of revival, to be filled with His Spirit, to be faithful followers, and be soul winners for Jesus.
- C. The cooperation (v.18). They put their hands to the good work. There was unity, cooperation, no separation, no divisive spirits, and there was one vision and purpose.
- D. The claim (vs. 19-20). The God of heaven will give us success. “His faith!”

Let us rise and build – a Christian life, a Christian fellowship, a strong church, and a strong Christian home. A church where people are at odds with each other has quenched God’s Spirit. The church of Jesus Christ has one supreme task of reaching the world for Jesus. We need unity and a fresh anointing.

It only takes a few negative spirits to throw water on the fires of revival. What a dangerous thing to be a negative or divisive spirit before a Holy God.