

## Nehemiah 1:11-2:20

### HOOK

Nehemiah is working in Sousa. He is from Jerusalem..at least his family is.

The church/temple has been destroyed. He's hundreds of miles away. He has the heart like Jesus for Jerusalem.

Our church should be concerned for our city. We should bless our city, love our city, serve our city, in the name of Jesus. That's one of the major themes of Nehemiah.

We are looking at a very personal journal. One which reflects like a diary of the experience of Nehemiah as he became Artaxerxes' governor of Judah.

With loyal service to King Artaxerxes, Nehemiah, after receiving the tough word about Jerusalem, is given permission to go to rebuild the city and temple ... a true act of God working in the heart of Artaxerxes. Until that point, it was unheard of.

We know this because when they enter (as we will see in this chapter) they are treated as enemies and a threat. If others had been there, the resistance would have been less radical.

That's why this lesson of Nehemiah has been titled, "Mission in the face of critics."

(Read Neh. 1:11z-2:20)

### BOOK

1. Why was it necessary to build the walls first? (safety from attack)
2. How did they know they would be attacked? (Sanballat and Tobiah made it pretty plain)
3. So what was the first thing Nehemiah did when he arrived in Jerusalem? (Shabat)
4. Why do you suppose he didn't call a large meeting of all the inhabitants? (snitches and lack of confidence in him, suspicion)
5. What was the order of events prior to Nehemiah's departure:
  - A. Serve the king in a way which represented his Heavenly Father
  - B. Prayed
  - C. Responded to the King's questions
  - D. Made his request, humbly.
  - E. Set a timeline for the King's concerns
  - F. Asked for the King's authority in travel
  - G. Asked for the King's materials (timber)
6. What bonuses did Nehemiah receive from the King? (cavalry and officers sent with him)
7. Why did he set out during the night? (safer)
8. Why did Nehemiah survey the city before talking with the authorities/overseers?
9. What is the significance of Nehemiah being the only one riding a mount? (vs12)
10. What was he examining, specifically? (the wall, and the materials)
11. Why did he keep his plans secret from the local authorities?
12. In Vs 17, 18, Nehemiah is rather brief in his description of his conversation with the authorities. Do you think it was short?
13. The criticism Nehemiah took... why do you suppose it did not deter him? (look at verse 18)
14. Why do you suppose there are always critics to God's work?
15. What were the two things which Nehemiah told his critics they would not share with him? (out of Jerusalem, no claim to glory)

### LOOK

1. What were Nehemiah's most admirable traits?
2. How did Nehemiah overcome his fears?
3. How do we usually handle our fears?
4. What made Nehemiah the great leader he was?
5. What are some ways we can respond to criticism?
6. Why do you think Nehemiah was so confident that God would lead him to success?

### TOOK

1. How do you think God is calling you to be like Nehemiah when you are challenged in life?
2. \*What specific steps could you take in the next few days to anticipate criticism and handle it in a way that gives glory to the Lord?
3. How can you demonstrate your dependence on the Lord for success?

# Nehemiah's Jerusalem

