

NEHEMIAH

Lesson 2 - Chapter 2

Nehemiah had been faced with a problem, the crumbling walls of Jerusalem, and it aroused his passion and drove him to prayer. In Chapter 2 we see what happens when he waits for God's timing and a door is opened for Nehemiah to make a request from the king. This week we will see more of his character as Nehemiah steps out in faith to move forward with the plans God put on his heart to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem.

Always remember to begin your study with prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to open your heart and mind to all He has for you.

Memory Verse – This week's memory verse is Proverbs 3:5-6.

*“Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding:
In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.”*

Key Word(s)

Read through the entire chapter, looking for words or themes that are repeated. Make note of those words and their significance here.

Read Nehemiah 2:1- 3.

We know that Nehemiah served as cupbearer to King Artaxerxes, the king of Persia, and in Nehemiah 2:1 we find him in the presence of the king. It is important to note the month given here – Nisan. If you look back to Nehemiah 1:1 you will find that Nehemiah first heard of the condition of Jerusalem in the month of Chislev, 3 or 4 months prior to this, giving us insight into how long he had prayed and waited on the Lord.

1. How had Nehemiah prepared himself for this meeting with the king?

2. What question did the king ask Nehemiah in verse 2?
 - a. What are we told in the last sentence of verse 1?

 - b. What was Nehemiah's initial response to the king's question in verse 2?

It is important for us to understand the significance of this incident. Nehemiah was a servant, actually a slave, even though his position was a good one. It was not allowed in that day for anyone to appear before the king downcast or mourning. Nehemiah's answer took courage and boldness from the Lord.

3. In verse 3, what was Nehemiah's answer to the king's question?

Read Nehemiah 2:4-8

1. Write out the question spoken by the king in verse 4.

2. The king's response is clearly an answer to Nehemiah's prayer and an open door from the Lord!

a. How long did Nehemiah pray and wait for this time to come?

b. Stop and think about this. What lesson is there for us in Nehemiah's example?

3. You may be in a situation like this right now, praying and waiting for an answer or an open door. Don't give up! Trust that God hears and He will answer in His perfect time. How do the following scriptures encourage you in this?

a. Psalm 27:14

b. Psalm 40:1

c. Isaiah 40:31

4. After all the preparation in prayer Nehemiah has done, what does verse 4 tell us he did before he answered the king?

a. This is a different kind of prayer than before. How would you describe it?

b. What does it tell you about Nehemiah that even after all those months of prayer, he prayed again?

5. Nehemiah requested three things of King Artaxerxes. In Nehemiah 2:5-8, find the verse where each type of request is mentioned and write the verse number and the request below.

Verse #

Request

a. Permission

b. Protection

c. Provision

6. Who put Nehemiah in the place and time to make these requests?

7. How might Mordecai's words in Esther 4:14 apply to Nehemiah?

8. The last sentence in Nehemiah 2:8 reveals Who Nehemiah is crediting for this provision.

a. Fill in the words below from NKJV:

“And _____ granted them to me according to _____

b. Take time now to consider how the Lord has provided for you through the hands of a person in your life. How can you give God the glory for that provision as well as giving thanks to the individual?

Read Nehemiah 2:9-10.

“Then I went...” It is good for us to notice that Nehemiah had prayed, then the Lord opened the door for him to make his request to the king, but next he had to take the first step toward Jerusalem in faith.

1. Where does Nehemiah 2:9 tell us he went?

2. Nehemiah was granted all that he requested from King Artaxerxes and more! In addition to the letters from the king, what else does verse 9 tell us he sent with Nehemiah?

3. What would be the significance of the king sending these high-ranking officials with him?

4. **Personal:** Think of a time when God answered your prayer above and beyond your request.
 - a. Write about His provision here.

 - b. Write a word of thanks to the Lord for His faithful provision.

 - c. How did this effect your prayers in the future?

5. Who do we find in Nehemiah 2:10 that heard of Nehemiah's arrival in the region?

6. The actions of Nehemiah are being observed.
 - a. What was the reaction of Sanballat and Tobiah in Nehemiah 2:10?

 - b. Why?

7. Just as Nehemiah was observed, the world is watching us as we walk out our faith.
 - a. What reactions do we see from the world to our Christian walk?

 - b. Why do you think they have these reactions?

 - c. What should we do when we see these reactions?

Read Nehemiah 2:11-16.

1. “*So I came to Jerusalem...*” How long does verse 11 say Nehemiah has been there? What does this tell you about Nehemiah?

2. Nehemiah 2:12 tells us that he “*arose in the night.*” From each of the following verses, where did Nehemiah go and what did he observe?

a. Nehemiah 2:13

b. Nehemiah 2:14

c. Nehemiah 2:15

Note: There is a map of the wall of Jerusalem included at the end of next week’s lesson. Looking ahead at that map would be helpful in getting a picture of Nehemiah’s night time trip.

3. Now look closer at verses 12 and 16.

a. What cautions do you see Nehemiah taking?

b. Why do you think he is doing this?

Read Nehemiah 2:17-20.

Now that Nehemiah has surveyed the wall and understands more of the situation, he is ready to speak to the people.

1. List the four reasons Nehemiah gave for rebuilding the wall from verse 17 below.

a.

b.

c.

d.

2. According to verse 18, by whose authority does Nehemiah say he has come?

3. Notice the reaction of the people in Nehemiah 2:18.

- a. What did they say?
- b. What did they do?
- c. What example do you see here to apply to your own life?

4. The enemy is worried and the opposition arises. A man has been on his knees, has a mission from God and has set out on his mission, so the enemy has good reason to be worried!

- a. From Nehemiah 2:10 and 2:19, who are the opposition?
- b. What was the reaction of this enemy when they heard that work had begun on the wall?

5. Nehemiah replied with strong words to the taunting of the enemy. In verse 20, what does he say about:

- a. ...the God of heaven _____
- b. ...we His servants _____
- c. ...but you (the opposition) _____

In closing...

1. In Nehemiah chapter 1 we saw a man of prayer. What more did you learn about this man Nehemiah in chapter 2?

2. Nehemiah faced opposition from the very beginning. When the people of God step out in His will, the enemy doesn't like it.

- a. Write of a time when you faced opposition to the work God had given you to do.
- b. When the enemy attacks, what encouragement do you find in Jeremiah 1:19?

Memory Verse

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*In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.”
Proverbs 3:5-6*