

Becoming a Leader for God Nehemiah 2

Introduction:

1. The book of Nehemiah has served to inspire leaders for centuries. It is the story of a servant in Persia who became an incredible leader for God in Jerusalem.
2. Nehemiah was a slave in the king's palace. Nehemiah's people (Israel) had been taken into captivity and Nehemiah found himself as a servant in the king's quarters.
3. Nehemiah did not forget his people, his homeland, or his God. When Nehemiah received the report from Jerusalem, he was heartbroken (1:3-4). God's city was a reproach.
4. Nehemiah went to prayer (1:5-11), God opened up some incredible doors, and Nehemiah found himself leading a group of people in a reconstruction project in Jerusalem.
5. Through Nehemiah's leadership, they finished the project in 52 days!
6. What made Nehemiah such a leader - a leader that people wanted to follow?

Nehemiah was a man of deep emotion. 2:1-3

1. Isn't it interesting that there was a notable change in Nehemiah and the king couldn't help but notice. 2:1-2
2. The condition of God's city affected him in a deep way. He was moved and it clearly showed. 2:3, 1:4
3. Nehemiah's personal life was comfortable - he worked in a palace as the king's cupbearer. Yet his heart ached for God's city and God's people. It **bothered** him that God's name was being reproached by the broken down condition of the city where God had placed His name.
4. What a refreshing attitude to see in a person. Nehemiah's concern was not for his personal comforts. Self-preservation was not the issue. God and His glory was the issue.
5. As you study the Bible, you will find that spiritual leaders were always people of great emotion and passion for God.
 - David - **1 Samuel 17:45-47**
 - Moses - **Exodus 32:19-20**
 - Jesus - **Luke 19:41**
 - Paul - **Acts 15:1-2** (it riled Paul up)
6. Leaders for God have emotions that run deep concerning their God. It bothers them when somebody blasphemes God, when false doctrine is propagated, when others try to hinder God's work from moving forward, etc.

Nehemiah was a man of great devotion. 2:4-10

1. As soon as Nehemiah heard about the wretched condition of Jerusalem, he went to prayer. We spent two weeks studying this prayer. Nehemiah was a man of great faith, trust, and devotion in his God.
2. Something really struck me in Chapter Two regarding this, also. Nehemiah is standing before the king and conversing with him. 2:4
3. Right in the middle of a conversation with the king of Persia, Nehemiah prays to his God.

- I don't think this means he said, "King, wait a minute," and then knelt down and started praying.
 - This simply means that while conversing with the king, he was praying to God from his heart. Nehemiah knew this was a key moment and his complete trust was in God.
4. It would have been easy for Nehemiah to hop all over this when the king asked him this question. But Nehemiah paused to lift up a prayer to his God. The king may have thought he was catching a breath or thinking, but the Bible tells us he was praying.
 5. God answered Nehemiah's prayers in a big way. 2:5-8
 6. The king was gracious and kind to Nehemiah, but Nehemiah understood that all the good that came from the king was in reality the goodness of God. 2:8
 7. Let this be a lesson: spiritual leaders for God are people of prayer and devotion. You aren't prepared or equipped to lead others unless you are a man or woman of prayer.
 8. Spiritual leaders are people of great faith and trust in God. They trust His Word. They stay in constant attitude of prayer. As Paul said, "*Pray without ceasing.*"

Nehemiah was a man of forward motion. 2:11-20

1. I love verse 11, "So I came to Jerusalem." Nehemiah put some feet to his prayers. God opened the doors, but Nehemiah had to take that step of faith and go.
2. Nehemiah's deep emotion and great devotion would mean nothing if he didn't leave the palace and go to the broken down wreckage of Jerusalem.
3. The emotion that was in his heart and the prayer that was on his lips demonstrated themselves in his actions. He was a man of action.
 - When he got to Jerusalem, he surveyed the destruction. 2:12-15
 - Next, he gathered the leaders of Jerusalem together and challenged them. 2:16-18
 - The next chapter, he organized them into groups and they were working.
4. Nehemiah wasn't playing around. God had commissioned him, God had opened the doors, and Nehemiah took the bull by the horns and got busy.
5. Leaders don't just talk a good talk. They are people of action! The deep emotion they have in their hearts for God, and their devotion to God in prayer, moves them to action.
 - **Illustration:** College professors at Bible College that never pastored a church or even built a bus route or Sunday School class, but they have all the answers.
6. Some Christians have all the answers, yet there is not active fruit in their lives. If we truly love the Lord, it should make a difference in the way we live.
 - **Romans 12:11** - "*Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord.*"
 - **Titus 2:14** - "*...zealous of good works*"
 - **1 Corinthians 9:24** - "*Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.*"
7. Christian, would your Christian life be characterized by forward motion? Are you learning God's Word, growing in God's Word and practicing God's Word in the details of your life?
8. The attitude the Christian should possess is perfectly described in **Philippians 3:13-14.**

May God raise up some leaders like Nehemiah here at Crossroads!