



NEHEMIAH: FULLY PERSUADED FOR GOD

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Nehemiah was serving in the trusted position of cupbearer to the king of Persia when men of Judah came and told him, “The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province *are* in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem also *is* broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire” (Nehemiah 1:3). When he heard this, he “...sat down and wept, and mourned *certain* days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven” (Nehemiah 1:4). This news was devastating; but under Nehemiah’s leadership, God’s people at Jerusalem overcame daunting challenges and rebuilt the wall of protection around this city because they were fully persuaded on God’s Word.

First, Nehemiah himself became fully persuaded that God would help him and the believers of Jerusalem accomplish this work. He laid bare his soul to God in prayer.

Nehemiah 1:8,9:

Remember, I beseech thee, the word that thou commandedst thy servant Moses, saying, If ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the nations:

But if ye turn unto me, and keep my commandments, and do them; though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven, yet will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen to set my name there.

Nehemiah rehearsed before God the promise that had been given to Moses. For four months he continued seeking God and His Word for encouragement and direction—becoming completely convinced that He would bring His promise to pass. Then, God opened the door for Nehemiah to speak to the king about leaving to rebuild the wall as well as getting passage to Judah and the necessary resources for building (Nehemiah 2:1-8).

Next, Nehemiah helped the Judeans at Jerusalem become fully persuaded that with God's help they would succeed. Not only were the walls of Jerusalem broken down, but also the believing of God's people was broken down—from living in affliction and reproach. Nehemiah helped them build strength back into their believing. After arriving, he shared with them what God had put on his heart and what God was doing to bring His will to pass.

Nehemiah 2:18:

Then I told them of the hand of my God which was good upon me; as also the king's words that he had spoken unto me. And they said, Let us rise up and build. So they strengthened their hands for this good work.

The phrase “So they strengthened” can be applied to a mind determined to act with resolution. Inspired by Nehemiah, the people grew determined, resolving to take action.

Being fully persuaded enabled Nehemiah and his fellow Judeans to overcome the obstacles they faced. Enemies of God's people antagonized them from the outset of the project, laughing them to scorn and accusing them of rebelling against the king (Nehemiah 2:19). But Nehemiah confronted the critics with conviction: “The God of heaven, he will prosper us....” He would not let the believers be deterred from their purpose, boldly declaring, “...we his servants will arise and build...” (Nehemiah 2:20).

Nehemiah 4:6:

So built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof: for the people had a mind to work.

How did they reach this milestone? They had “a mind to work” and rolled up their sleeves and did it. They kept moving ahead, refusing to be intimidated. But the persecution didn't stop, for their adversaries heard of their progress and “...were very wroth, And conspired all of them together to come *and* to fight against Jerusalem, and to hinder it” (Nehemiah 4:7,8). But Nehemiah steadied the people with God's Word.

Nehemiah 4:14,17,18:

And I looked, and rose up, and said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, Be not ye afraid of them: remember the Lord, which is great and terrible [to be revered], and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses.

They which builded on the wall, and they that bare burdens, with those that laded, every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon.

For the builders, every one had his sword girded by his side, and so builded. And he that sounded the trumpet was by me.

Nehemiah exhorted the Judeans to remain strong: “Remember the Lord!” “Our God shall fight for us!” (verses 14,20). They defended themselves even as they kept building—working with one hand and holding a weapon in the other! Their believing action was a direct reflection of being fully persuaded in their minds. This enabled God to bring them the victory recorded in Nehemiah 6:15, “So the wall was finished in the twenty and fifth *day of the month* Elul, in fifty and two days.” Even the enemy recognized “that this work was wrought of our God” (verse 16).

With Nehemiah’s leadership, these committed Judeans rebuilt the wall in just fifty-two days. They overcame all obstacles and rebuilt the walls around Jerusalem because they stayed assured in their hearts before God and were fully persuaded in believing.

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