

“When God Works!”
Nehemiah 2:12-16

Introduction:

1. Have You Ever Felt Overwhelmed?
 - When Something Seems So Difficult, That You Wonder If You Can Ever Get It Done?
 - A Goal! A Project! A Responsibility! (**IE:** Car Repairs)
2. When It Comes To Rebuilding For The Lord, We Will Often Feel Overwhelmed!
 - In Our Own Lives / Family / Church!
 - There Is So Much To Do!
 - There Is So Little Time To Do It!
 - There Is So Much To Overcome!
3. Imagine How Nehemiah Felt & What Nehemiah Thought When He Finally Arrived In Jerusalem!
 - Review:
 - God Gave Nehemiah A Great Burden! (Chapter 1)
 - For The People Of God & The City Of God!
 - God Gave Nehemiah A Great Opportunity! (2:1-8)
 - God Placed Him In The Presence Of The King Of Persia! And God Directed The Heart Of The King!
 - God Gave Nehemiah A Great Success! (2:9-11)
 - Finally - “So I Came To Jerusalem!”
 - Probably Relieved & Excited To Have Arrived! But Now What? Now The Real Work Begins! And The Work Would Have Been Overwhelming To Nehemiah! Because:

1. *Sometimes The Work Seems So Small!*

- This Is How It Started For Nehemiah!
- 2:12 - “And I arose in the night, I and some few men with me; neither told I any man what my God had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem: neither was there any beast with me, save the beast that I rode upon!”
- It Began In Secret!
 - “And I Arose In The Night!”
 - No Fanfare! It Was Dark! Only The Light Of The Stars & Perhaps Some Lanterns! Everyone Else Asleep!
 - Was He Fearful? There Were Enemies Around! It Wasn’t Yet Time To Disclose Why He Was There!
- It Began In Solitude!
 - “I And Some Few Men With Me!”
 - Not Just A Few – But The “Fewest Of Few!” – 3 Or 4?
 - Not All Of The “Captains Of The Army & Horsemen” That Brought Him To Jerusalem (2:9)
 - Was This Foolish?
 - **IE:** Foolish For The President To Do This! The People Knew That Some Great Man Had Come For Some Great Purpose – But What?
- It Began In The Spirit!
 - “Neither Told I Any Man What My God Had Put In My Heart To Do At Jerusalem!”
 - A Seed Was Planted In The Heart Of Nehemiah, That Was Growing!
 - How Did It Get There? Placed There By God!
 - Philippians 2:13 - “For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure!”
 - It Wasn’t Nehemiah’s Idea – It Wasn’t Original With Him! It Was God’s Idea – But It Became Nehemiah’s!
 - What Has The Lord Put In Your Heart To Do?
 - Make His Ideas Your Ideas – And Put Them To Work! It Takes Spiritual Initiative To Rebuild For The Lord!
- It Began In Silence!
 - “Neither Was There Any Beast With Me, Save The Beast That I Rode Upon!”
 - Some Animals Are Noisy! (**IE:** Shanti In The Morning) Wanted To Be As Quiet As Possible!

- Not To Attract Attention! Didn't Want Anything To Get In The Way Of His Mission!
- And, I'm Sure God's Work Seemed So Small To Nehemiah At That Time – In That Dark Night!
 - But, It Is When The Work Seems Small That God Begins To Work Big! (Israel / Birth Of Christ / Revivals)
 - **IE:** In Wales, 1904, A Young Teenager Named Florrie Evans, Stood Up In A Youth Meeting To Declare That She Loved The Lord Jesus With All Her Heart! With These Words, The Holy Spirit Seemed To Fall Upon The Meeting & The Fire Quickly Spread To The Other Young People In Her Area! From That Small Beginning, A Revival Poured Forth In Wales, Until There Were Over 100,000 Conversions, And It Spread Throughout The World!
- Zechariah 4:10 Asks: "For who hath despised the day of small things?"
 - It Is In Those Times With God – In Secret / Solitude / Silence – That His Spirit Begins To Work!
 - Zechariah 4:6 - "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts!"
 - Don't Despise The Day Of Small Things!
 - Song: "Does the place you're called to serve him / Seem so small and little known / Little is much when God is in it / And he'll not forsake his own // Little is much when God is in it / Labor not for wealth or fame / There's a crown and you can win it / If you go in Jesus name!
- God's Work Begins When Our Own Resources End!

2. ***Sometimes The Work Seems So Discouraging!***

- There Was A Lot Of Work For Nehemiah To Do!
- 2:13- "And I went out by night by the gate of the valley, even before the dragon well, and to the dung port, and viewed the walls of Jerusalem, which were broken down, and the gates thereof were consumed with fire!"
 - He Saw Everything Dark!
 - "And I Went Out By Night!"
 - It Was Dark, And Probably Gloomy From The Dust & Fire & Smoke That Destroyed The Walls & Gates!
 - Isn't It Amazing How The Environment Can Affect Your Mood?
 - Dark / Gloomy / Cloudy – Depressing / Discouraging!
 - How, Lord, Can This Work Be Done?
 - He Saw Everything Down!
 - "Viewed The Walls Of Jerusalem!" – What Was Left!
 - To Inspect The Damage & See What He Would Need To Get & Do To Rebuild!
 - Where Was He Looking? He Wasn't Looking Up!
 - Where Were The Walls? "Broken Down!" Most Of It Was Strewn All Around The Ground!
 - **IE:** Like The Damage From A Tornado! People Are Looking Down On The Ground For Anything They Can Save & Salvage!
 - When Someone's Head Is Down, It's As If They Have No Hope! **IE:** Old Roommate In College!
 - How, Lord, Can This Work Be Done?
 - He Saw Everything Destroyed!
 - "And The Gated Thereof Were Consumed With Fire!"
 - Nehemiah Went On This Midnight Mission, Because He Wanted To See Things For Himself!
 - Was His Brother, Hanani, Right?
 - Was What He Told The King Accurate?
 - Were Things As Bad As He Had Heard?
 - Yes & Probably Worse Than He Imagined!
 - How, Lord, Can This Work Be Done?
 - It Is Easy To Become Discouraged, When We Look At The Situation & Not At The Savior!
 - David - 2 Samuel 22:29 - "For thou art my lamp, O LORD: and the LORD will lighten my darkness!"
 - Do Not Be Discouraged When Everything Seems Dark / Down / Destroyed!
 - Because 2 Corinthians 12:9 - "My strength is made perfect in weakness!" (The Lord Said To Paul)

- When Things Seem Dark, It Is Time For The Lord To Shine!
- God's Work Begins When Our Own Resources End!

3. ***Sometimes The Work Seems So Impossible!***

- 2:14-16 - "Then I went on to the gate of the fountain, and to the king's pool: but there was no place for the beast that was under me to pass. / Then went I up in the night by the brook, and viewed the wall, and turned back, and entered by the gate of the valley, and so returned. / And the rulers knew not whither I went, or what I did; neither had I as yet told it to the Jews, nor to the priests, nor to the nobles, nor to the rulers, nor to the rest that did the work!"
 - As Nehemiah Went Around The City, Probably Wondered: "Could It Get Any Worse?"
 - Answer: Yes!
 - Not Just Discouraging – Now Seemed Impossible!
- It Was Impossible To Pass!
 - Map - (2:13) Valley Gate - Dragon Spring - Dung Gate
 - Map - (2:14) Fountain Gate - Kings Pool
 - "There Was No Place For The Beast That Was Under Me To Pass!" – "No Place — To Pass!"
 - Dead End! IE: Maze
 - Can I Really Go Where God Wants Me To Go?
 - Can I Really Do What God Wants Me To Do?
 - These Obstacles In The Work Of The Lord Become Tests Of Faith! (Noah – Building The Ark For 100 Years) (Abraham – Sacrificing His Son, His Only Son)
 - What Obstacle Is In Your Path? Will You Trust & Obey?
- It Was Impossible To Plan!
 - 2:15 - "Then Went I Up In The Night By The Brook" (Or Valley – Kidron)
 - Nehemiah's Plan Was To Go Alongside The Wall!
 - God's Plan Was To Bring Him Into The Valley To "View The Wall" – What Difference Does This Make? A Big One!
 - Close To The Wall – Nehemiah Was Looking Down!
 - Away From The Wall – In The Valley – Now, Nehemiah Was Looking Up!
 - God Was Giving Him A "Bigger Picture" Of What His Plan Was!
 - What Was Nehemiah Looking Up At? Not Just The Walls, But Jerusalem & The Temple! The Hill Of Mt. Zion! Psalm 121:1 - "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. / My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth!"
 - It Wasn't Impossible! Because: "With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible!" (Matthew 19:26)
- It Was Impossible To Perform!
 - 2:15 - "Turned Back!"
 - Probably Wanted To Go Further!
 - Probably Wanted To Get Started Right Away!
 - But He Couldn't!
 - Nehemiah's Resources Were Limited!
 - Not A One Man Show! God's Plan Always Includes People!
 - God's Resources Were Unlimited!
 - And He Had The People For His Plan!
 - 2:16! God Would Use All These People!
 - And He Did: "And They Said, Let Us Rise Up And Build!" (2:18)
 - The Willing Workers That God Had Were Probably Beyond The Imagination Of Nehemiah!
 - Luke 18:27 - "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God!"
- And God's Work Begins When Our Own Resources End!

Conclusion:

1. Does The Work Of God Overwhelm You?
 - The Work To Rebuild? (Life / Family / Church)
 - Because It Seems So Small / Discouraging / Even Impossible?

- Remember:
 - When It Seems Small — God Is Great!
 - When It Seems Weak — God Is Strong!
 - When It Seems Impossible — God Is Powerful!
- 2. God's Work Begins When Our Own Resources End!
 - And Now, It Is Time For God To Shine!

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