

Restoration and Renewal—The Book of Nehemiah

Restoring our Vision



What's Your Vision?

Do you have a vision?

Do you think God has a vision for your life?

Do you feel qualified to answer His call?

Nehemiah caught a vision from God and did not limit what God could do in his life. Likewise—we must not limit what God desires to do in our lives, families and community.

A. Spiritual Vision and Practical Vision

1. **Spiritual Vision:** Nehemiah chapter 1 reveals Nehemiah as the spiritual, godly seeker. He spends four months mourning, praying, fasting and interceding before God. He bathed the situation in prayer and sought out the will and hand of God.
2. **Practical Vision:** From Nehemiah chapter 2 it is clear that God had revealed much to Nehemiah about what needed to be done to fulfill the vision. His quick answers to Artaxerxes reveal he had developed a 'strategy' to accomplish the vision.

B. Are You Too Old To Be a Visionary?

1. **Abraham** was 75 Gen 12:1-4
2. **Moses** was 80 Exodus 7:7
3. **John the Apostle**—received the vision of Revelation when he was a prisoner and between 80 and 90 years old.

C. The Birth of a Vision *Nehemiah 2*

1. **Passion:** *God put a passion in Nehemiah's heart 2:1-3*

What Characterized Nehemiah Being a Visionary?

- It was a long standing passion, not changing after four months. Chislev (*Neh 1:1*) to Nisan (*Neh 2:1*).
 - He has a personal connection to the vision. *Neh 2:3*
 - He had prayed about it for four months.
 - No one else had stepped up to resolve the problem.
 - He is uniquely qualified—“I am the cupbearer...” *Neh 1:11*
 - He was deeply moved for the vision. *Neh 2:2*
 - He was willing to sacrifice for the vision—leaving the comfort of the King's palace to live in the ruins of Jerusalem.
2. **Attitude:** *He was submissive to God 2:4-5*
 - He was submissive to God and the King
 - He was not demanding—He prayed and let God lead
 3. **Readiness:** *He was ready to go. 2:6-9*
 - “Furthermore...” He was ready with a plan *2:7*
 - He was NOT afraid to ask at the right time
 4. **Faith:** *He walked by Biblical faith 2:10-20*
 - The hand of God was upon him *2:18*
 - He persevered through obstacles *2:10; 19*
 - He took time to reflect and view the task *2:11-16*
 - He challenged the people to fulfill the vision *2:17-20*

Psalm 133

:1 Behold, how good and how pleasant *it is* for brethren to dwell together in unity!

:2 *It is* like the precious oil upon the head, running down on the beard, the beard of Aaron, running down on the edge of his garments.

:3 *It is* like the dew of Hermon, descending upon the mountains of Zion; For there the LORD commanded the blessing— Life forevermore.

Fulfilled Prophecy

When the King said he would finance the building of the walls, gates and Nehemiah's home, it was a fulfillment of a prophecy made to Daniel (*Daniel 9:25*). This “*decree*” was fulfilled by King Artaxerxes, issued on March 5, 444 B. C to Nehemiah in Nehemiah 2. Daniel prophesied this fulfillment almost 100 years before Nehemiah heard it. Read the surrounding verses, Daniel 9:24-27 and you will see more prophecy predicting the coming Messiah Jesus and His being “*cut off*” in the crucifixion and then the last days of the “*seventieth week.*” “*Seven weeks,*” where one week equals a 7 years, means 49 years and the “*62 weeks*” means 434 years for a total of 483 years. This dates from March 5, 444 B. C. with the King's decree. to March 30 33, A.D. of Jesus' death. Any who took the time to calculate this would have seen that Jesus was the Messiah, prophesied by Daniel around 539 B.C. Daniel 9:26 says that Jerusalem will be destroyed after the Messiah is crucified. This was fulfilled in 70 AD by Titus. Jesus had warned of this in Luke 21:24.

Nehemiah Chapter 2

:1 And it came to pass in the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, *when wine was* before him, that I took the wine and gave it to the king. Now I had never been sad in his presence before.

:2 Therefore the king said to me, "Why *is* your face sad, since you *are* not sick? This *is* nothing but sorrow of heart." So I became dreadfully afraid,

:3 and said to the king, "May the king live forever! Why should my face not be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' tombs, *lies* waste, and its gates are burned with fire?"

:4 Then the king said to me, "What do you request?" So I prayed to the God of heaven.

:5 And I said to the king, "If it pleases the king, and if your servant has found favor in your sight, I ask that you send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers' tombs, that I may rebuild it."

:6 Then the king said to me (the queen also sitting beside him), "How long will your journey be? And when will you return?" So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time.

:7 Furthermore I said to the king, "If it pleases the king, let letters be given to me for the governors *of the region* beyond the River, that they must permit me to pass through till I come to Judah,

:8 and a letter to Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, that he must give me timber to make beams for the gates of the citadel which *pertains* to the temple, for the city wall, and for the house that I will occupy." And the king granted *them* to me according to the good hand of my God upon me.

:9 Then I went to the governors *in the region* beyond the River, and gave them the king's letters. Now the king had sent captains of the army and horsemen with me.

:10 When **Sanballat** the Horonite and **Tobiah** the Ammonite official heard *of it*, they were deeply disturbed that a man had come to seek the well-being of the children of Israel.

:11 So I came to Jerusalem and was there three days.

:12 Then I arose in the night, I and a few men with me; I told no one what my God had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem; nor was there any animal with me, except the one on which I rode.

:13 And I went out by night through the Valley Gate to the Serpent Well and the Refuse Gate, and viewed the walls of Jerusalem which were broken down and its gates which were burned with fire.

:14 Then I went on to the Fountain Gate and to the King's Pool, but *there was* no room for the animal under me to pass.

:15 So I went up in the night by the valley, and viewed the wall; then I turned back and entered by the Valley Gate, and so returned.

:16 And the officials did not know where I had gone or what I had done; I had not yet told the Jews, the priests, the nobles, the officials, or the others who did the work.

:17 Then I said to them, "You see the distress that we *are* in, how Jerusalem *lies* waste, and its gates are burned with fire. **Come and let us build the wall of Jerusalem, that we may no longer be a reproach.**"

:18 And I told them of the hand of my God which had been good upon me, and also of the king's words that he had spoken to me. So they said, "Let us rise up and build." Then they set their hands to *this good work*.

:19 But when **Sanballat** the Horonite, **Tobiah** the Ammonite official, and **Geshem** the Arab heard *of it*, they laughed at us and despised us, and said, "What *is* this thing that you are doing? Will you rebel against the king?"

:20 So I answered them, and said to them, "**The God of heaven Himself will prosper us; therefore we His servants will arise and build,** but you have no heritage or right or memorial in Jerusalem."