



VICTORIOUS CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

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Study 8: PREPARATION FOR SUCCESS

Nehemiah 2:11-16

On arrival at Jerusalem Nehemiah took off some time to rest and recuperate from the stresses and strains associated with the long journey. During this time he must have been praying and preparing for his mission. In any venture it is the days of preparation that precedes success; and the quality of preparation determines the degree of success. It is a true saying that proper preparation prevents poor performance. Nehemiah's attitude and actions reveal great wisdom in sound preparation, silent planning, secure partnership and site preview.

1. SOUND PREPARATION:

Nehemiah 2:11; Ezra 8:32; Ecclesiastes 3:1; Genesis 2:2,3; Mark 6:31; Isaiah 40:28-31

Despite the enormous task awaiting him, Nehemiah took off some time to rest. The three days rest for Nehemiah and the three days rest for the exiles under Ezra may have been the normal time for full recuperation after such a long journey. It is important to note that Nehemiah did not rush off to commence the work programme without proper rest, under the excuse of the urgency and enormity of the work. There is time for everything – time to work and time to play, etc. God Himself rested after creation and set the precedence for man to follow. Depriving the body of the essential rest and recovery can lead to premature breakdown in health. When it comes to rest and recuperation, it is a true saying that “you cannot cheat nature”. The motorway advert “Tiredness kills, take a break” is not only true of motorists but in other aspects of life as well. Activities conducted under stress (due to tiredness) are often confused, unproductive and prone to accidents. A sound mind in a sound body is a boost for success. Heavy weights do not fly. They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings as the eagles, they shall run and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint. Though Nehemiah recognized the need to rest, he never used it as an excuse for slumber and inactivity for longer than it was necessary. He was not like strong **Issachar** who “... saw that rest was good...; and bowed his shoulder to bear, and became a servant unto tribute” (Genesis 49:14-15). Too much of a good thing can become bad. Three days after arrival Nehemiah had already started his mission.

2. SILENT PLANNING:

Nehemiah 2:12,16; I Samuel 10:15,16; Lamentations 3:26; Galatians 1:15-21; Genesis 22:1-14; II Timothy 2:15

Nehemiah did not blow his trumpet before the chore was done. He did not shout Hurrah before he was out of the woods! He took time to plan and prepare. Before his enemies knew of his intentions, he had already developed serious plans that

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were very mature, and it was too late for them to foil it. Silent but serious preparation is the route to strategic planning. He silently prepared a plan for moving from where they were to where they wanted to be (i.e. completion of the building of the wall). There is wisdom in silent preparations. The silent years are years of planning and preparation. Without plans, purposes are defeated. Your achievement can be no greater than your plans are sound. Those who fail to plan have already planned to fail. Solomon gave the sound advice “Prepare thy work without, and make it fit for thyself in the field; and afterwards build thine house” (Proverbs 24:27). It is obvious from this that if the plans and preparations are not fit for the intended purpose, the resulting building will not be either!

3. SECURE PARTNERSHIP:

Nehemiah 2:12; Mark 3:13-15; Judges 7:1-7; Amos 3:3; 1 Corinthians 15:33; Psalm 1:1; Proverbs 21:16

Nehemiah was not a lone ranger. Lone rangers seldom achieve much in life. Super structures are built by teams not individuals. There is power in the unity of believers (Psalms 133; Ecclesiastes 4:9) because synergy and divine principles allows more to be accomplished through teamwork. It is true that **T**ogether **E**verybody **A**chieves **M**ore. However, just gathering together a group does not make a TEAM – that is why Nehemiah rejected the offer of the ungodly to join his building TEAM. Nevertheless, unless you are building a dollhouse you will need the involvement and co-operation of others. Jesus had his twelve disciples, Moses his seventy elders and Gideon his three hundred soldiers. Wrong selection of partners hinder rather than help. Two cannot walk together except they agree. Nehemiah screened out the enemies of God (vs. 20) but selected a “few men” of like mind, goal, and destiny who “had a mind to work” (Nehemiah 4:6). Therefore, merely running around in the company of unbelievers and backsliders wastes time, leads to compromise, invites the wrath of God and is potentially very destructive (2 Chronicles 18:1-3; 19:1,2; 20:35-37; 25:7-12).

4. SITE PREVIEW

Nehemiah 2:13-15; Numbers 13:1,2,17-20; Joshua 2:1; Luke 14:28-32; Isaiah 28:16

The development of watertight plans against failure requires accurate information on the task at hand. Gathering sufficient relevant information about a project, business, career, research etc. is essential to developing effective strategy for success. Construction firms spend substantial sums and time on site investigations well before the actual work construction commences. Business executives invest much resource in market surveys either before establishing a business or to direct their efforts profitably. The time and resources spent in gathering relevant information is never wasted. God expects man to find out the cause of his predicaments (Proverbs 25:2; Haggai 1:5-11; Joshua 7; 2 Samuel 21:1). Nehemiah undertook a quiet survey programme at night that enabled him to assess the situation for himself, gather sufficient information to inform / refine his plans as well as prepare for a presentation that will motivate the people to the task. What preparations are you making for your success in life? Remember, he that believeth shall not make haste.