

Nehemiah 1: When God Gives You a Burden

*De. 28:1-7 NLT “If you fully obey the Lord your God and carefully keep all his commands that I am giving you today, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations of the world. **2** You will experience all these blessings if you obey the Lord your God:*

v.36 “The Lord will exile you and your king to a nation unknown to you and your ancestors. There in exile you will worship gods of wood and stone!

v.32 You will watch as your sons and daughters are taken away as slaves. Your heart will break for them, but you won’t be able to help them.

Think About it: Because of their disobedience to God...

- They would lose their prominence among the nations of the world.
- Their economies would come under a curse. No matter what they did, they would not be blessed.
- Their worship of Jehovah would be replaced by the worship of things that are not God.
- Their sons and daughters would become slaves to demonic governments in foreign lands.

1Kings 12:16 NIV When all Israel saw that the (new) king refused to listen to them, they answered the king: “What share do we have in David, what part in Jesse’s son? To your tents, Israel! Look after your own house, David!” So the Israelites went home.

*Jeremiah 29:10-11 NIV This is what the Lord says: “When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my good promise to bring you back to this place. **11** For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.*

When God Gives You a Burden

Nehemiah’s Burden was to re-build the wall. *To re-build what had been torn down and wasted away through decades of neglect.*

The Burden God Gives...

*Nehemiah 1:1-2:6 NLT These are the memoirs of Nehemiah son of Hacaliah. In late autumn, in the month of Kislev, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes’ reign, I was at the fortress of Susa. **2** Hanani, one of my brothers, came to visit me with some other men who had just arrived from Judah. I asked them about the Jews who had returned there from captivity and about how things were going in Jerusalem. **3** They said to me, “Things are not going well for those who returned to the province of Judah. They are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem has been torn down, and the gates have been destroyed by fire.” **4** When I heard this, I sat down and wept. In fact, for days I mourned, fasted, and prayed to the God of heaven.*

1) Begins with Recognition.

Nehemiah 1:4 ESV “As soon as I heard these words I sat down and wept and mourned for days...”

Where there is no vision people perish Pro. 29:18 KJV.

2) It Requires Intercession.

v. 4 he mourned, fasted and prayed...

5 Then I said, “O Lord, God of heaven, the great and awesome God who keeps his covenant of unfailing love with those who love him and obey his commands, **6** listen to my prayer! Look down and see me praying night and day for your people Israel. **I confess that we have sinned against you. Yes, even my own family and I have sinned!** **7** We have sinned terribly by not obeying the commands, decrees, and regulations that you gave us through your servant Moses. **8** “Please remember what you told your servant Moses: **‘If you are unfaithful to me, I will scatter you among the nations. 9 But if you return to me and obey my commands and live by them, then even if you are exiled to the ends of the earth, I will bring you back to the place I have chosen for my name to be honored.’** **10** “The people you rescued by your great power and strong hand are your servants. **11** O Lord, please hear my prayer! Listen to the prayers of those of us who delight in honoring you. Please grant me success today by making the king favorable to me. Put it into his heart to be kind to me.” In those days I was the king’s cup-bearer.

v.8 “Please remember what you told your servant Moses: **‘If you are unfaithful to me, I will scatter you among the nations. 9 But if you return to me and obey my commands and live by them, then even if you are exiled to the ends of the earth, I will bring you back to the place I have chosen for my name to be honored.’**

Ezekiel 11:17 NIV Therefore say, ‘Thus says the Lord God: I will gather you from the peoples and assemble you out of the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel.’

11 O Lord, please hear my prayer! Listen to the prayers of those of us who delight in honoring you. **Please grant me success today** by making the king favorable to me. Put it into his heart to be kind to me.”

“The ‘detonator’ that churches lack today is prayer. It has the power to ignite the dynamite of the Gospel and powerfully shake the world.” – John Maxwell.

3) Imparts an Obligation.

2:1 Early the following spring, in the month of Nisan, during the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes’ reign, I was serving the king his wine. I had never before appeared sad in his presence. **2** So the king asked me, “Why are you looking so sad? You don’t look sick to me. You must be deeply troubled.” Then I was terrified, **3** but I replied, “Long live the king! How can I not be sad? For the city where my ancestors are buried is in ruins, and the gates have been destroyed by fire.” **4** The king asked, “Well, how can I help you?” With a prayer to the God of heaven, **5** I replied, “If it please the king, and if you are pleased with me, your servant, **send me to Judah to rebuild the city** where my ancestors are buried.” **6** The king, with the queen sitting beside him, asked, “How long will you be gone? When will you return?” After I told him how long I would be gone, the king agreed to my request.

“then I was terrified”

4) Results in Action.

What Has God Put on Your Heart to Do?

God is in the reconstruction business. This awesome book of Nehemiah is one of the most helpful pictures we have of recovery from broken lives.