

“God Has a Dream... We’re In It”

Nehemiah 1

Warm Up Question(s) – Choose one

- How do you respond when you hear bad news about people you know and care for?
- What unfinished, or unstarted, projects at home disturb you?

By nature God takes a special interest in restoration work. He gets great joy out of taking broken people and broken things and renewing them. This is good news for all of us who are broken and live in a broken world isn't it! But how does God go about making this dream a reality in the real world? The story of Nehemiah provides us with a wonderful example of God's restoration work.

Discussion Questions

- 1) **Read Nehemiah 1.** In verses 1-3 what event is being discussed (2 Kgs 25⁹⁻²¹; Ezra 4⁷⁻²⁴)?

What recent events or reports come to mind that evoke similar images and feelings for you?

- 2) What does Nehemiah do when he hears Hannai's report (v.4)? How would you describe and explain Nehemiah's response if you were sending a report back to the Jewish remnant?
- 3) Prayer often has various elements, beginning with how God is addressed. How does Nehemiah address God (cf. Dan. 9⁴)? How does this compare or contrast with how you address God (or often hear him addressed)?
- 4) What appeal does Nehemiah make in verse 6 (cf. v.11)? Do you ever appeal to God like this? Why or why not?
- 5) How would you describe Nehemiah's confession (vv.6b-7)? How often do you hear, or practice, confession in prayer?
- 6) What hope does Nehemiah hold out for God's people (cf. v.8 & Deut. 4²⁶⁻²⁷; v.9 & Deut. 30¹⁻⁴)? Why?
- 7) If you were God, how would seeing & hearing Nehemiah's persistent prayers¹ like this impact you?
- 8) What people or issues or concerns are on your heart & mind that you would like prayer for?

¹ Note that the time between 1:1 (“in the month of Kislev”) and 2:1 (“in the month of Nisan”) = about four months.