

Nehemiah

Bad News! Good Grief!

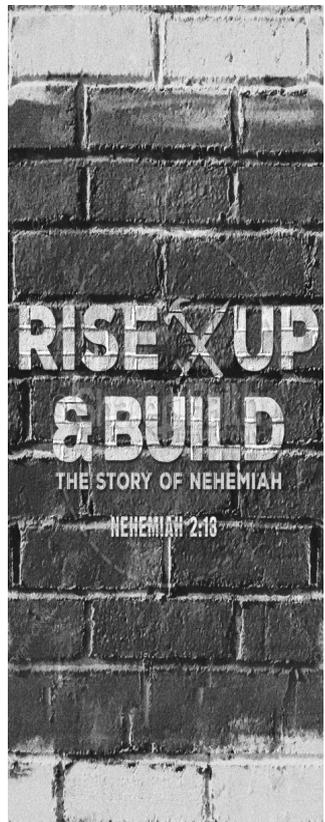


Devotional

We do not need to make an effort to realize what happens in our city. Sometimes bad news catches us totally off guard and reduces us to tears. We hurt so badly that we need time to nurse the hurt; we need time away from distractions; we shun even physical sustenance. News about the destruction of Nehemiah's beloved homeland

evoked such a response in him. His feelings of patriotism, of concern for the Jews in Jerusalem, made him heartsick. As a royal cupbearer, Nehemiah was living a comfortable life in the palace of the king of Persia, far away from the strife and violence that ripped Jerusalem. Yet, he chose not to ignore the situation. He did not turn a deaf ear nor shrug his shoulders at the news. In his distress, he weeps bitterly and goes to God in prayer for solace.

We don't have to search through the media for bad news about our city. It is there, up front and personal, all around us. God expects us to be concerned. He wants our hearts to be broken as we consider those who are less fortunate and are experiencing pain and suffering. God wants us to act, but he desires that we come to him first, in prayer, for guidance and direction.



Reflect

What is your typical reaction to bad news or news that involves harm or danger to your loved ones? Think about your city. Have you ever felt particularly moved by its conditions? What situations triggered this feeling and how did you respond? Did you pray?

Respond

Ask God to direct you to a particularly troubling issue in your city. Spend time praying and fasting for its resolution.

Pray

“God, connect with me here, as I seek you in your Word. Lord, thank you that I can come boldly to your throne of grace. Make me sensitive to the needs of others, and let me seek your loving support through the gift of prayer. Lord, guide me to find a way to make a difference in my city.”

Verses

Nehemiah 1:1-4 –

“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. 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. 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.” When I heard this, I sat down and wept. In fact, for days I mourned, fasted, and prayed to the God of heaven.”

Courtesy of YouVersion Bible Plan **[Nehemiah] Now Is The Time:**

