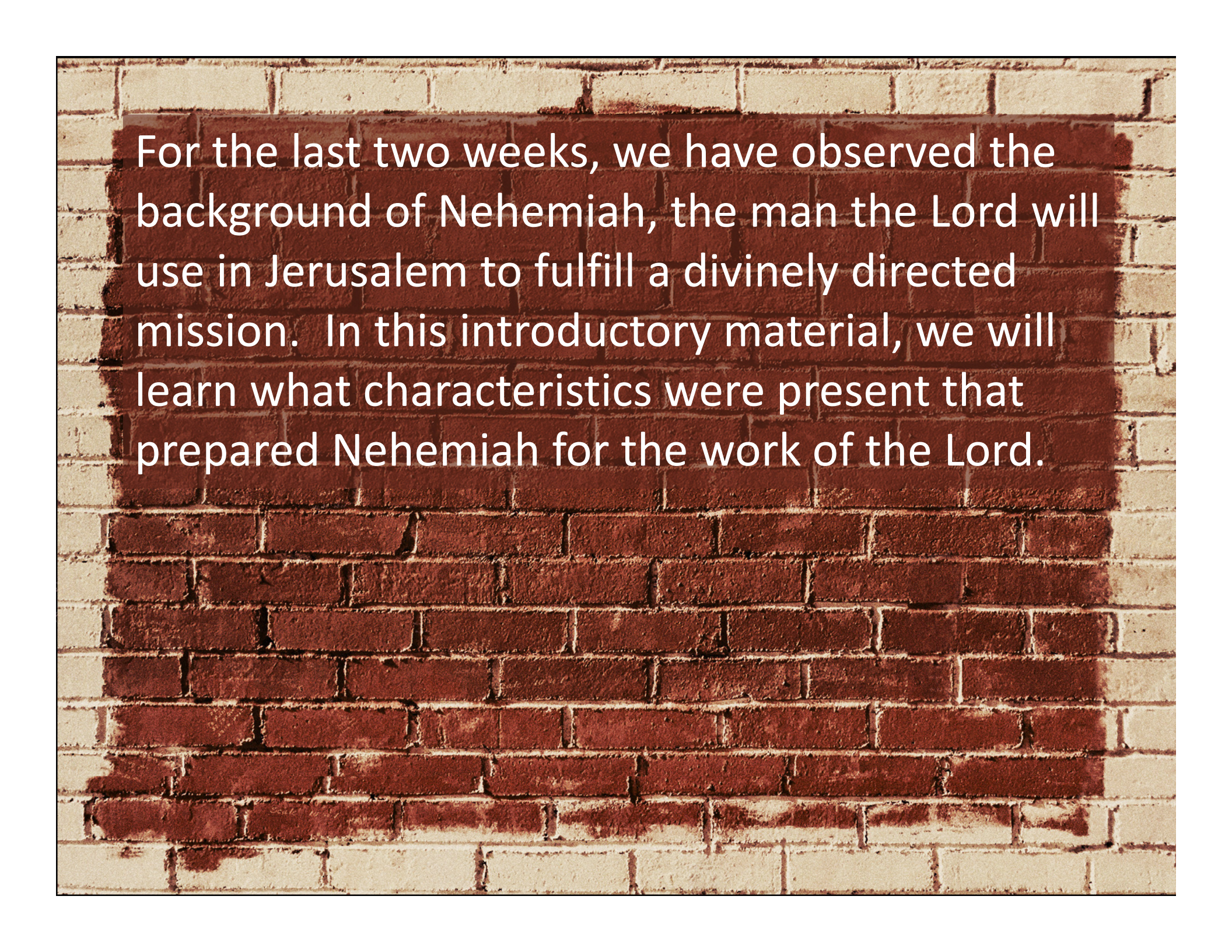


# ARISE AND BUILD

Neh. 2:20

Neh. 2:20 Then answered I them, and said unto them, The God of heaven, he will prosper us; therefore **we his servants will arise and build:** but ye have no portion, nor right, nor memorial, in Jerusalem.

The background of the image is a brick wall. The bricks are arranged in a standard running bond pattern. The top half of the wall is composed of light-colored, tan or cream bricks. The bottom half is composed of dark red bricks. A dark red rectangular area is superimposed over the top half of the wall, containing white text.

For the last two weeks, we have observed the background of Nehemiah, the man the Lord will use in Jerusalem to fulfill a divinely directed mission. In this introductory material, we will learn what characteristics were present that prepared Nehemiah for the work of the Lord.

The first chapter reveals Nehemiah's vision of the need in Jerusalem and exemplifies the acrostic – ACTS – in regard to prayer:

A – Adoration, 1:5

C – Confession, 1:6-7

T – Thanksgiving, 1:8-10

S – Supplication, 1:11

The last two weeks we observed two primary perspectives regarding Nehemiah's mission:

I. THE INQUIRY OF THE SITUATION, 1:1-3

II. THE INTERCESSION OF THE SERVANT, 1:4-11

This morning, we continue to look at the background circumstances that preceded the mission:

### III. THE INVOLVEMENTS OF THE SOVEREIGNS, 2:1-20

Neh. 2:1 And it came to pass in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king, *that* wine *was* before him: and I took up the wine, and gave *it* unto the king. Now I had not been *beforetime* sad in his presence.

2 Wherefore the king said unto me, **Why is thy countenance sad**, seeing thou *art* not sick? **this is nothing else but sorrow of heart**. Then I was very sore afraid,

A. The Persistence in Prayer, 2:1 “And it came to pass in the month Nisan...”

- ❖ Nehemiah received disturbing news about Jerusalem and his people in the month Chisleu (November/December 446 B.C.) and began to pray. At least four months later, in the month Nisan (March/April 445 B.C), we pick up the narrative about Nehemiah before the King.

Jas. 5:16b “...The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”

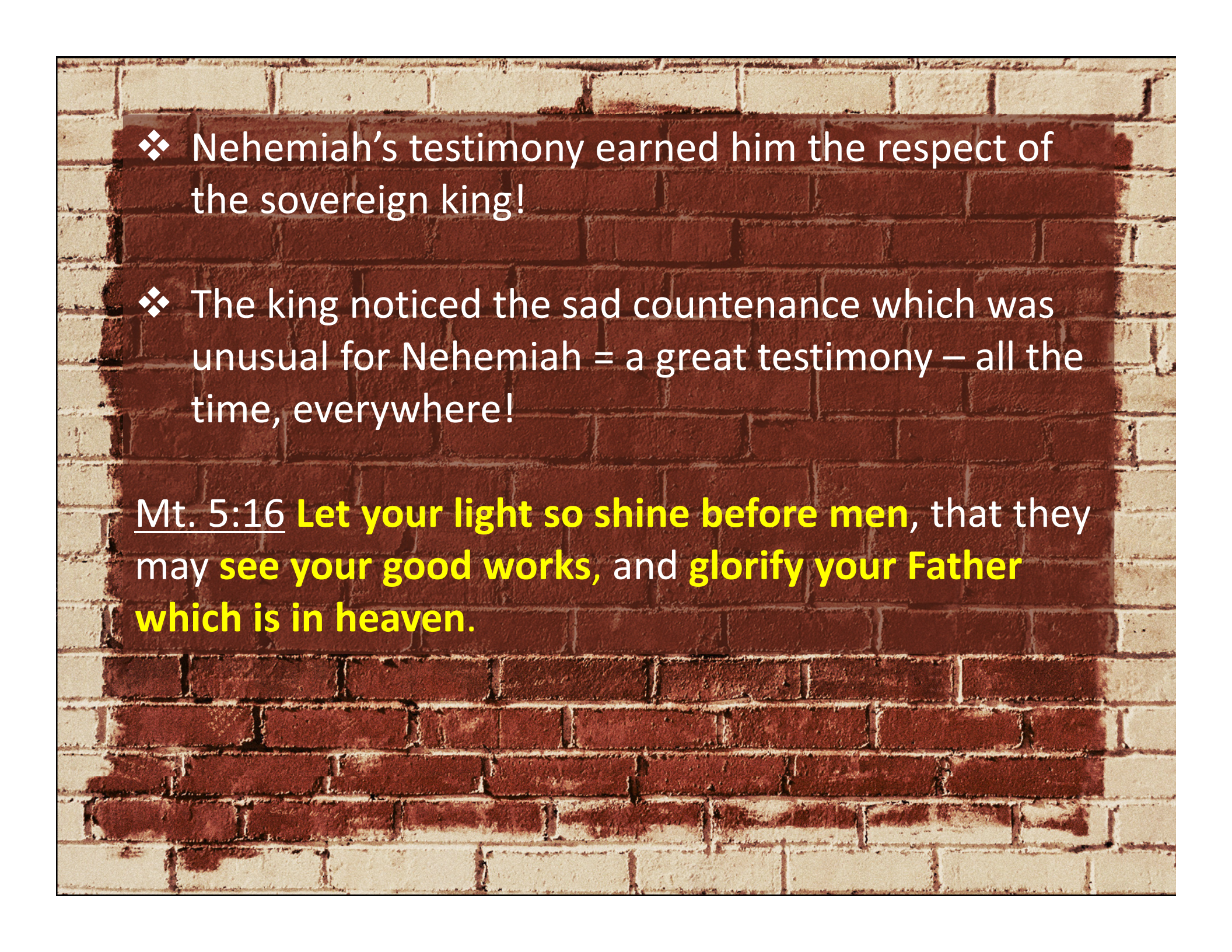
Jer. 33:3 **Call unto me, and I will answer thee**, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.

Eph. 3:20 Now **unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think**, according to the power that worketh in us,

21 **Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages**, world without end. Amen.

B. The Powerful Profession, 2:1b-2 "...Now I had not been *beforetime* sad in his presence. 2

Wherefore the king said unto me, **Why is thy countenance sad**, seeing thou *art* not sick? **this is nothing else but sorrow of heart**. Then I was very sore afraid,



❖ Nehemiah's testimony earned him the respect of the sovereign king!

❖ The king noticed the sad countenance which was unusual for Nehemiah = a great testimony – all the time, everywhere!

Mt. 5:16 **Let your light so shine before men**, that they may **see your good works**, and **glorify your Father which is in heaven.**

## C. The Perceptive Plea, 2:3-4

Neh. 2:3 And said unto the king, **Let the king live for ever**: why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, *lieth* waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire?  
4 Then the king said unto me, For what dost thou make request? **So I prayed to the God of heaven.**

1. The Praise, 2:3a "...Let the king live for ever..."

- ❖ An approach with respect will most often soften the heart of resistance.

2. The Plea, 2:3b4a “...why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, *lieth* waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire? 4 Then the king said unto me, For what dost thou make request?”

- ❖ Nehemiah answered the king's question with a question – “...why should not my countenance be sad...”
- ❖ An inquiry of respect to a higher authority will dissuade antagonizing him.
- ❖ The king's plea was one of respect, grace, and benevolence – “...For what dost thou make request?”

### 3. The Prayer, 2:4b "...So I prayed to the God of heaven."

❖ Prayer is the believer's *Instant Messaging* to the God of heaven!

Rom. 12:12 Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation;  
**continuing instant in prayer;**

Isa. 26:3 Thou wilt keep *him* in perfect peace, **whose mind is stayed on thee**: because he trusteth in thee.

## D. The Practical Preparation, 2:5-8

Neh. 2:5 And I said unto the king, **If it please the king, and if thy servant have found favour in thy sight, that thou wouldest send me unto Judah**, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it.

6 And the king said unto me, (the queen also sitting by him,) For how long shall thy journey be? and when wilt thou return? **So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time.**

## 1. The Respectful Approach – “...If it please the king...” (vs. 5-7)

- ❖ Nehemiah had been praying for at least four months, and no doubt, carefully considered what was needed to fulfill his mission to rebuild Jerusalem.
- ❖ Nehemiah never mentioned Jerusalem by name, avoiding unnecessary irritation.
- ❖ Nehemiah humbly stated his status as the king’s servant – “...**if thy servant have found favour in thy sight...**”

- ❖ Nehemiah sought permission and support for the mission – “...**that thou wouldst send me unto Judah...that I may build it.**”
- ❖ Nehemiah mentioned respect for his family heritage, an oriental trait that Artaxerxes would also have respected – “...unto the city of **my fathers'** sepulchres...”

## 2. The Reciprocated Answer, 2:6

Neh. 2:6 And the king said unto me, (the queen also sitting by him,) For how long shall thy journey be? and when wilt thou return? **So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time.**

- ❖ The king sought details regarding the personal time involvement of Nehemiah.
- ❖ Nehemiah's preparation was revealed in setting a time.

### 3. The Requisition Asked, 2:7-8

Neh. 2:7 Moreover I said unto the king, **If it please the king, let letters be given me to the governors** beyond the river, that they may convey me over till I come into Judah;

8 And **a letter unto Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber** to make beams for the gates of the palace which *appertained* to the house, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall enter into. And **the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me.**

- ❖ In his preparation, Nehemiah anticipated that he would need proof of authority.
- ❖ Nehemiah anticipated the building supplies needed to complete the mission.
- ❖ Nehemiah procured the assistance from the king.

Prov. 21:1 The king's heart *is* in the hand of the LORD, *as* the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.

- ❖ Nehemiah perceived and acknowledged the true source of success: "...And **the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me.**"

Phil. 4:13 I can do all things **through Christ** which strengtheneth me.

## Conclusion

Luke 11:5 And he said unto them, **Which of you shall have a friend**, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, **Friend**, lend me three loaves;

6 For **a friend** of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him?

7 And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee.

8 I say unto you, **Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.**

9 And I say unto you, **Ask**, and it shall be given you;  
**seek**, and ye shall find; **knock**, and it shall be opened  
unto you.

10 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that  
seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be  
opened.

Prov. 18:24 A man *that hath* friends must shew  
himself friendly: and **there is a friend *that* sticketh  
closer than a brother.**