

Leadership does not immunize from problems. But a leader does not flounder around in confusion when he meets a problem. He has learned certain procedures which enable him to face a crisis without panic. He grasps the problem, whips it into organized shape at once, seeks information that is necessary to its solution, does what is necessary according to the size and complexity of the problem such as analyzing its elements, and then proceeds to get a solution. While this is a rather detailed idea of what we do now, Nehemiah grappled with problems and the solutions he gave are recorded. Look at some of his problems and what he did about them:

- a. He was scoffed at (2:19). He looked to the Lord for help (2:20). He encouraged his staff of workers to labor on (2:20).
- b. He was plotted against (6:10). He stayed his ground. He did not run and called upon God to judge such wickedness (6:14).
- c. He was ridiculed (4:1-3). He prayed about this and found the Lord faithful (4:4-9).
- d. He was threatened (4:10-12). He responded by setting a watch and calling upon the Lord (4:13-23).
- e. He was discouraged with his staff (5:1-5). He took action against them and told them about his own example. (5:6-19).
- f. He was offered subtle compromise (6:1-9). He refused to be intimidated and kept true to the Lord.
- g. His standards were challenged. (13:1-31). Nehemiah never hedged. He simply said that God's truth stood and that was it. He rebuked those who opposed him.

Conclusion Nehemiah had a job to do. He did it. Not without difficulty, but his trust in the Lord did not waver. God has given a divine statement of what it truly means to lead and do so in accord with the Word. God give us more men of this calibre until He comes!

THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH

"Patterns for Organization and Leadership"

Nehemiah 1-13

Introduction

1. Thirty sermons have been preached on this book and studies have been provided for these sermons. It has been a glorious experience in His Word to share these truths. To God be the glory and praise forever and ever.
2. Nehemiah has a significant name. It means "Jehovah has consoled." Indeed, what a comfort this man was to the Jewish people of his day. That was back in 445 B.C., some 12 years after Ezra and over 100 years after the first group had returned from the captivity in Babylon (536 B.C.).
3. The Book of Nehemiah can easily be divided into two main sections: 1) The reconstruction of the wall (1-6) and 2) The reinstruction of the people (7-13). The book begins with prayer (1:5-11) and ends with it (13:29-31). It is full of practical issues.
4. For this study, take time to note the counsel which this book provides for organization and leadership. Much parallels modern business methods. But, like Samuel Chadwick of Manchester, England, Nehemiah was a man who prayed, "O Lord, make us intensely spiritual, but keep us perfectly natural." Today's organization has worked with men, and failed to wait on God. We have lots of motion, but little unction. We have wrestling committees, but not wrestling knees! God give us Nehemiah-type men! Here are some areas of consideration for your spiritual benefit:

1. NEHEMIAH'S OBJECTIVES

- a. For the people. It was clear. Nehemiah sought to alleviate the "affliction" and the "reproach" of the people (1:3). He desired to seek their "welfare" (2:10).
- b. For the city. The place was in ruins. The walls were demolished and the gates burned (1:3). The city needed to be rebuilt (2:5).
- c. For the faith. This is clearly taught in Nehemiah's

opening prayer (1:5-11). There was need for a spiritual revival. He aimed to get it. The book is loaded with such intent.

NOTE: An organization must have clear objectives. These are designed to state the basic purposes, final goals, end results to be achieved. They are used to reduce the differential between policies and performance.

2. NEHEMIAH'S POLICIES

These are defined as a statement of the action to be taken in specific situations when they arise. This is an all-important issue in any organization. Nehemiah had a number of clear policies. Here are some:

- a. Word of God upheld. There are a number of instances relating to it in the book, but none is any more pertinent than chapter 8. His strong appeal to the Bible was initially marked as well (1:7-9). The specifics are drawn out, but as for policy, it was not the writings of some skillful artisan, but the Word of God!
- b. God Himself honored. Priority is given to the very Person of God. The great ninth chapter provides this (vv. 1-37). The standard of all standards was God Himself. His Person and work were to be applied for all situations.
- c. Spirituality for the people advanced. The issue with Nehemiah was not acceptance, but separateness unto God. Summarily, this was the will of God! Oh, how this was stressed (10:1-39; 13:1-31). Incidentally, this particular item upheld specifics like fasting and confession (9:3), feasts (8:13-18), and sabbath keeping (10:31).

3. NEHEMIAH'S PROCEDURES

NOTE: Procedures in management are the details and step by step action which is taken to achieve objectives. Procedures include three items: 1) select processes 2) agree on methods 3) coordinate work flow. Or to put it another way: 1) action to be

taken 2) source of action and 3) time schedule for action. Take a look at what Nehemiah did:

- a. Arranged for personal action. There is one item about Nehemiah: when he saw the need, he did something about it (2:12-20). For Nehemiah, the first procedural item was to personally survey the need. Once this was known, he went about to alleviate it. He did not ignore the need nor leave it for another to do!
- b. Enlisted group action. An example of this is clearly seen (2:17-20). These verses show distinctly God's skill in Nehemiah to demonstrate true leadership. He knew how to develop people. He got all kinds of people working, including children, women, and professional people (3:1-32; 7:1-73; 11:1-12:47).
- c. Provided for full action. The text assures any cursory reader that everyone in Israel was a part of solving the problem. They were not a part of the problem, but the solution! Read carefully chapters 3, 11, 12. The wall was completed in 52 days (6:15). The total objectives were not fully accomplished for nearly 12 years (13:6 cf. with 1:1). But surely it can be registered that as for Nehemiah, the plan was to move full speed ahead! The job had to be done! A real leader, Nehemiah was able to get people to cooperate, produce, and gain satisfaction from their labor.

4. NEHEMIAH'S STANDARDS

Standards are always necessary in organizations. They state the minimal limits of acceptance and prescribe how much and how well. For Nehemiah the standard was high. It was God's will at any cost. He noted this at the beginning (1:8, 9). He laid his own life on the example block (5:14-19). He repeatedly called the deviations from the standard (9:1-38; 10:1-39; 13:1-31). For those who resent standards, here is a strong word. The standard is a check up and supervision in order to fulfill the objectives rightly. When objectives are fully known, the standards are more easily gained.

5. NEHEMIAH'S PROBLEMS