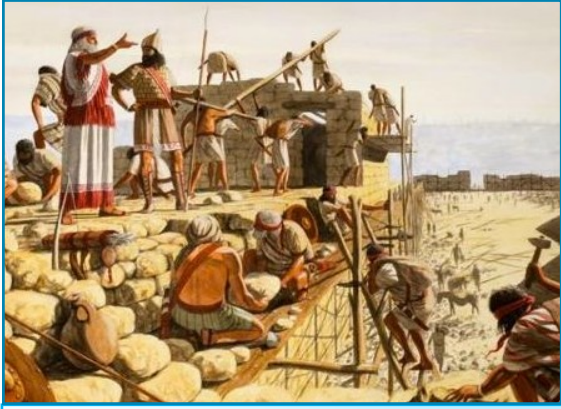


# Nehemiah

“The Faithful”



*“Nehemiah said ‘The God of heaven is the one who will give us success, and we his servants are going to start building; but you have no share or claim or historic right in Jerusalem.’”*

Nehemiah 2:20

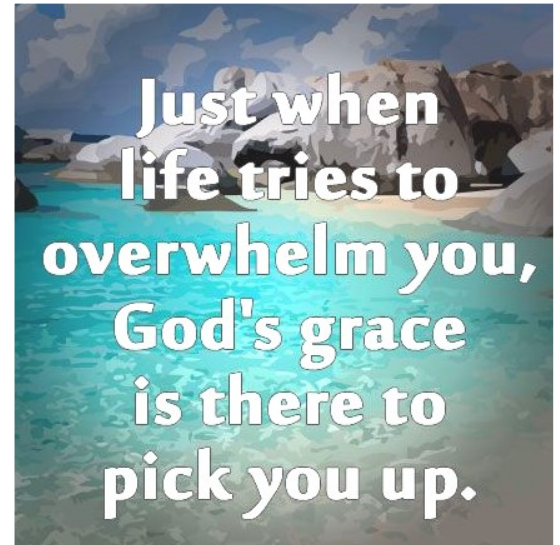
Nehemiah was the cupbearer to the King. That doesn't sound like a very responsible job until I stop to remember I had heard that serving hemlock in that day was a good way to kill someone, so I would want to know that I trusted the person bearing me a cup of fluid!

Nehemiah was a Hebrew serving in Persia quite a ways from Jerusalem. One day when Nehemiah was in the temple he was given a message *“Those who survived the exile and are back in the province are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been burned with fire.”* Nehemiah 1:3 Nehemiah

wept for his people and prayed for his people and the city of Jerusalem. His prayer was *“LORD, the God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with those who love him and keep his commandments, let your ear be attentive and your eyes open to hear the prayer your servant is praying before you day and night for your servants, the people of Israel. I confess the sins we Israelites, including myself and my father's family, have committed against you.”* Nehemiah 1:5-6. God had heard his prayer and would answer it.

One day when he carried the wine into the king, the king noticed that didn't look very happy and asked what was wrong. Nehemiah told him how upset he was and asked the king if he could return to Jerusalem. The king told him he could leave to go rebuild. He also sent supplies, letters to help him get through, and an army to protect him while he traveled.

When the people from the surrounding areas heard that someone was coming to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem they were angry. While Nehemiah was there several situations that arose sounded like a trap to him. We still have that today. It may not be a physical trap, but it is a trap of gossip and entwining that polarizes and causes disunity in getting a job done. There is always someone who is not satisfied. It was the same then for the people around Jerusalem; they were jealous.



When he got to Jerusalem he spent three days inspecting the walls and then started to get the men together to re-build. He was meticulous in writing down everything that everyone did. He encouraged the people to tithe. The Bible tells us that the people worked from sun up until the stars came out, mostly with a tool in one hand and a weapon in another because outsiders were jealous. “They” had been making a profit, and now that was being taken away. The Jews were restoring their walls around Jerusalem and working to make it a safe place once again.

They rebuilt the wall in 52 days and the rest of it was finished in about six months! Then, Nehemiah went back to serving his king as he had before, but it was not too many years later that he had to go back and straighten the people out who were beginning to go astray again. Again he led the

people back to The Law of Moses. When things were going good and they had money again, they began to fall away from the Lord and go into their old ways. We are much like that today. We forget that the Psalmist said *“One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple.”* Psalm 27:4

Nehemiah was a passionate person who worked for his passions. His passion was both spiritual and physical as ours should be. Sometimes we may have to give up our own comfort to help others, but if we really believe in a cause we will do just that. Nehemiah felt his God led him and so he persevered.

Nettie sings “You’ll Never Walk Alone” in the musical “Carousel.” It is a song of hope and resilience to Julie after the death of her husband Billy Bigelow in the musical Carousel. It has become very well known for a song of hope and resilience even to being the national song for some football teams!

Nehemiah was the force they kept the people focused on what they should be doing. When things began to get stormy, he was there to give them hope and show them the right way. He never gave up and God was with him always, just as He is with us.

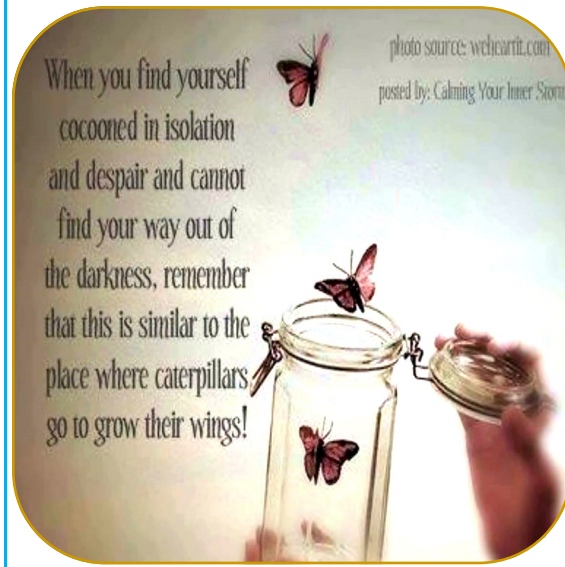
## YOU’LL NEVER WALK ALONE

*When you walk through a storm  
Hold your head up high  
And don't be afraid of the dark.  
At the end of a storm  
There's a golden sky  
And the sweet silver song of a lark.*

*Walk on through the wind  
Walk on through the rain  
Though your dreams be tossed and  
blown.*

*Walk on, walk on  
With hope in your heart  
And you'll never walk alone  
You'll never walk alone  
You'll never walk alone*

By Oscar Hammerstein II and  
Richard Rodgers



Heavenly Father. You are an awesome God as Nehemiah said. Forgive our many sins of omission and help us to allow You to minister through us to all people, believers and unbelievers as we feel You are leading us today and every day. Amen.

1. We don’t often hear about Nehemiah, yet many scholars have used him as a definite person who became a leader and serves as a model for us today. Why?
2. Why did the people outside Jerusalem not want the walls rebuilt?
3. Do you have any idea why Nehemiah wanted the names of everyone recorded? Is that a good practice today?
4. Why did the king of Persia allow Nehemiah to go home for a while to help rebuild the wall and even send supplies and guards along? What is the lesson for us in that?
5. Does God call you to be passionate?

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