

“Nehemiah’s Blueprint for Navigating a Crisis”

In the Old Testament book of Ezra, a remnant of the Jews who had survived the Babylonian exile returned to Jerusalem and began to rebuild the city. In the next book, we are introduced to Babylon’s King Artaxerxes’ cupbearer, Nehemiah, who despondently learns the walls of Jerusalem are broken, the doors and gates burnt, and the Jews’ faith is waning. A full-tilt crisis ensues. In thirteen chapters, we read vivid descriptions of Nehemiah and God repairing and restoring stability, security, and survival in Jerusalem. In the process, Nehemiah metamorphosis from cupbearer to building contractor to governor.

“So the wall was completed on the twenty-fifth of Elul, in fifty-two days. When all our enemies heard about this, all the surrounding nations were afraid and lost their self-confidence because they realized that this work had been done with the help of our God” (NIV, 2011, Neh. 6:15-16).

Application of Nehemiah’s blueprint for navigating a crisis:

- *Don’t Run and Hide*
- *Engage in Fervent Prayer; Weeping; and Fasting*
- *Confess Your Sins*
- *Reevaluate Your Priorities*
- *Make God the Center of Your Life*
- *Inspect Carefully*
- *Prepare For the Mission, Rise to the Call*
- *Strategically Get Others Involved (i.e. Individuals of Integrity)*
- *Understand the Urgency*
- *Work with All Your Heart (Prayer is not a substitute for hard work)*
- *Be tactful; Be confident (exercise emotional intelligence)*
- *Prepare to Cross your “Trans-Euphrates” (scary land on the other side of the river)*
- *Plan for Opposition (The Tobiahs, Sanballats, and Geshems of life who may intimidate, ridicule, discourage, or even threaten you). Encountering opposition is not an excuse to stop working; be persistent.*

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- *Be Courageous and Leverage Your Resources*
- *Give all Credit to God with Thanksgiving in your Heart*
- *Celebrate, but Know That Our Final Celebration Will Be in Heaven*
- *Tithe*
- *Keep the Sabbath Day Holy*

Manna for Thought:

1. What’s your mission? What’s your divine challenge?
2. Is prayer a top priority in your life? Do you wage battle on your knees?
3. Do you believe exercising obedient faith in God can achieve your impossible?
4. What do you need to restore stability and security (i.e., survive your crisis)?

By Remi Smith, founder and CEO of Compassionate Caring Ministries, whose mission is "To bring compassion, love, and support to parents whose adult child identifies as transgender."