

# BEING POSITIVE IN A NEGATIVE WORLD

Being a Positive Influence

## THIS VISION WAS FROM GOD

<sup>9</sup> When I came to the governors of the province west of the Euphrates River, I delivered the king's letters to them. The king, I should add, had sent along army officers and horsemen to protect me. <sup>10</sup> But when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite official heard of my arrival, they were very displeased that someone had come to help the people of Israel. <sup>11</sup> So I arrived in Jerusalem. Three days later, <sup>12</sup> I slipped out during the night, taking only a few others with me. I had not told anyone about the plans God had put in my heart for Jerusalem... **Nehemiah 2:9-12 NLT**

## NEHEMIAH GOT THE LEADERSHIP ON BOARD.

<sup>17</sup> But now I said to them, "You know very well what trouble we are in. Jerusalem lies in ruins, and its gates have been destroyed by fire. Let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem and end this disgrace!" <sup>18</sup> Then I told them about how the gracious hand of God had been on me, and about my conversation with the king. They replied at once, "Yes, let's rebuild the wall!" So they began the good work. **Nehemiah 2:17-18 NLT**

- Nehemiah met with God first and **God's anointing** was evident.
- We've got to **face reality** and not ignore it.
- We need to help others see beyond the challenges **to what could be**.
- It's better to be **a problem-solver** than a complainer.

## NEHEMIAH GIVES EVERYONE CREDIT AND PRAISE.

Above the Horse Gate, the priests repaired the wall. Each one repaired the section immediately across from his own house. **Nehemiah 3:28 NLT**

- Everyone did **his part**.
- Everyone was **working together** with focus.

## NEHEMIAH UNDERSTOOD DEALING WITH NEGATIVITY.

<sup>1</sup> Sanballat was very angry when he learned that we were rebuilding the wall. He flew into a rage and mocked the Jews, <sup>2</sup> saying in front of his friends and the Samaritan army officers, "What does this bunch of poor, feeble Jews think they're doing? Do they think they can build the wall in a single day by just offering a few sacrifices? Do they actually think they can make something of stones from a rubbish heap—and charred ones at that?" <sup>3</sup> Tobiah the Ammonite, who was standing beside him, remarked, "That stone wall would collapse if even a fox walked along the top of it!" **Nehemiah 4:1-3 NLT**

- There will always be **opposition by the enemy**.

<sup>6</sup> At last the wall was completed to half its height around the entire city, for the people had worked with enthusiasm. <sup>7</sup> But when Sanballat and Tobiah and the Arabs, Ammonites, and Ashdodites heard that the work **was going** ahead and that the gaps in the wall of Jerusalem were being repaired, they were furious. <sup>8</sup> They all made plans to come and fight against Jerusalem and throw us into confusion. <sup>9</sup> But we prayed to our God and guarded the city day and night to protect ourselves. <sup>10</sup> Then the people of Judah began to complain, "The workers are getting tired, and there is so much rubble to be moved. We will never be able to build the wall by ourselves." <sup>11</sup> Meanwhile, our enemies were saying, "Before they know what's happening, we will swoop down on them and kill them and end their work." **Nehemiah 4:6-11 NLT**

- Sometimes the enemies are **clear**, and sometimes **they are close**.
- God will **fight our battles**.

Then as I looked over the situation, I called together the nobles and the rest of the people and said to them, "Don't be afraid of the enemy! Remember the Lord, who is great and glorious, and fight for your brothers, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your homes!" **Nehemiah 4:14 NLT**

- Nehemiah was able to reassure his people by focusing them on the ability of their **God**.

<sup>19</sup> Then I explained to the nobles and officials and all the people, "The work is very spread out, and we are widely separated from each other along the wall. <sup>20</sup> When you hear the blast of the trumpet, rush to wherever it is sounding. Then our God will fight for us!" **Nehemiah 4:19-20 NLT**

- Get your **hands dirty** and get involved.

<sup>21</sup> We worked early and late, from sunrise to sunset. And half the men were always on guard. <sup>22</sup> I also told everyone living outside the walls to stay in Jerusalem. That way they and their servants could help with guard duty at night and work during the day. <sup>23</sup> During this time, none of us—not I, nor my relatives, nor my servants, nor the guards who were with me—ever took off our clothes. We carried our weapons with us at all times, even when we went for water. **Nehemiah 4:21-23 NLT**

The Builders Complete the Wall

<sup>15</sup> So on October 2 the wall was finished - just fifty-two days after we had begun. <sup>16</sup> When our enemies and the surrounding nations heard about it, they were frightened and humiliated. They realized this work had been done with the help of our God. **Nehemiah 6:15-16 NLT**

## STAY HUMBLE AND GIVE GOD THE PRAISE.

<sup>1</sup> All the people assembled with a unified purpose at the square just inside the Water Gate. They asked Ezra the scribe to bring out the Book of the Law of Moses, which the Lord had given for Israel to obey. <sup>2</sup> So on October 8 Ezra the priest brought the Book of the Law before the assembly, which included the men and women and all the children old enough to understand. <sup>3</sup> He faced the square just inside the Water Gate from early morning until noon and read aloud to everyone who could understand. All the people listened closely to the Book of the Law. **Nehemiah 8:1-3 NLT**

<sup>5</sup> Ezra stood on the platform in full view of all the people. When they saw him open the book, they all rose to their feet. <sup>6</sup> Then Ezra praised the Lord, the great God, and all the people chanted, "Amen! Amen!" as they lifted their hands. Then they bowed down and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground." **Nehemiah 8:5-6 NLT**

## NEXT STEPS FOR ME TODAY...

- **Ask God what he wants you to do today.**
- **Stay focused on the task God has given you.**
- **Do your part and get involved.**
- **Give God all the praise.**