



**Warm-up question:** Imagine yourself in Nehemiah's situation. Based on your track record, how do you think you would have responded if God had given you the vision of rebuilding the walls around Jerusalem?

Pray for God to give us hands that are ready to serve His purpose for us in *this* season of life.

**Ask the following Thought & Discussion Questions giving plenty of time for discussion.**

1. After Nehemiah's vision was confirmed (by word, prayer & time). He still had to wait until God made a way for him to act on his plans. In your life, what are you learning about waiting, maturing, and proper timing?
2. From one perspective it looked like Nehemiah was in the wrong place at the wrong time to rebuild Jerusalem, "I was cupbearer to the king of Persia." From another perspective he was right where God had strategically positioned him. How do you sense that God is using your circumstances to prepare you?
3. The best preparation for what comes *next* is faithfulness with what you have *now* (Matt. 25:21). What responsibilities or opportunities do you currently have that you could more faithfully steward?
4. Is there someone you know and respect who has pursued a vision? If you could set up a time to talk with them about what they have done, what questions would you ask? (They can be people you actually know or people you don't or even Characters from the Bible.) Followup - If you know the person why not ask to meet with them?
5. Nehemiah was no more successful the day he laid the final brick on the wall than the day he began praying and planning. How does defining success as faithfulness with what the Lord has given you to do, rather than recognition, promotion or position, help you in the daily grind?

**This Week:** I will be faithful in the little things I've been given today while trusting God to open the door to greater things in the days to come.

**Close by singing** Lord We Come Before Thee Now

1. Lord, we come before Thee now,  
At Thy feet we humbly bow:  
Oh, do not our suit disdain!  
Shall we seek Thee, Lord, in vain?  
Shall we seek Thee, Lord, in vain?

2. Lord, on Thee our souls depend;  
In compassion now descend,  
Fill our hearts with Thy rich grace,  
Tune our lips to sing Thy praise.  
Tune our lips to sing Thy praise.

3. In Thine own appointed way  
Now we seek Thee, here we stay.  
Lord, we know not how to go  
Till a blessing Thou bestow.  
Till a blessing Thou bestow.

4. Grant that all may seek and find  
Thee a God supremely kind.  
Heal the sick, the captive free;  
Let us all rejoice in Thee.  
Let us all rejoice in Thee.

## Right Where I'm Supposed To Be

Nehemiah 1:11-2:8

By this point in our journey through *Nehemiah*, your vision should be getting clearer. But getting a good focus on what you hope to accomplish is only the first step. You will most likely see how things *should be* long before you will know *how* the vision will be fulfilled.

This is where most visions die. I call it the *Valley of Agony* because it is the space between two mountain peaks.

*Mount Vision* - The exhilaration you feel when you first imagine how things could be.

*Mount Fulfillment* - The joy we feel when we see our dream realized.

*Valley of Agony* - Where we encounter many obstacles. And the first obstacle is the question of HOW.

How is my vision ever going to be realized? It's a good question because to fulfill the vision, you probably need:  
resources you don't have.  
skills you haven't acquired.  
connections you haven't made.  
an opportunity you haven't been given.

Your vision may be to raise a godly family, but you haven't even met Mr. Right. Or you want to reach a specific person or group of people with the gospel, but you don't speak their language. Or you want to pursue a career that will be of great service to people, but you're stuck taking classes that don't seem remotely related to the goal.

That's exactly where we find Nehemiah in today's lesson. His vision was to restore the city of Jerusalem so that God's purpose to bless the world through the descendants of Abraham could be fulfilled, but he was stuck in Susa (a thousand miles away) serving wine to the king of Persia. Just when it seemed like there was no way, God was using the most unlikely of circumstances to make a way!

After months of waiting, *The king said to me, "What is it you want?"* (Neh. 2:4a). Years of faithfully serving in the king's court suddenly opened a door of opportunity. When it did, Nehemiah was ready. While he had been waiting he was studying, praying, and planning. And one more thing. Nehemiah had been doing his day job with integrity and excellence. This turned out to be the key God used to unlock Nehemiah's destiny. So, here's our big take-away...

**While waiting for your opportunity, be faithful with what's already in your hand.**

The years he must have spent rising through the ranks to become the cupbearer to the king! He must have demonstrated incredible integrity, loyalty and competence. What must have seemed like a waste of time, in terms of his city building dream, turned out to be the perfect training he needed. His excellence in all he did put him in a position to stand before the one man on earth with the power to authorize his bold vision for Jerusalem. Nehemiah is a perfect illustration of the principle laid down in Proverbs 22:29 - *Do you see a man skillful in his work? He will stand before kings; he will not stand before men of lesser rank.*

So, lean into whatever is in front of you. Do the best you can with whatever is in your hand. Be so good at what you do that they can't ignore you. Don't despise any opportunity, job, class, phase of life, relationship, or chance to better yourself. All of life is connected and God will use the circumstances you are in NOW to position you for whatever is NEXT.

Our problem is that we confuse success with the fruits of success. If you are where God wants you, fulfilling the responsibilities he has given you, then you are successful. If you are being faithful right now, you are as successful as you will ever be - no matter what you accomplish later in life. Nehemiah was thrilled when he saw the final brick placed on the wall around Jerusalem. He had crossed the *Valley of Agony* from *Mount Vision* to *Mount Fulfillment*. But he was no more successful that day than he was the day his knees hit the ground and he began to pray about the burden God laid on his heart. You are successful today if you are serving God's purpose for this season of your life.