

NEHEMIAH HAS A SERIOUS TRIAL IN FRONT OF HIS EMPLOYER

(Nehemiah 2:1-8)

I. NEHEMIAH BOLDLY ASKS THE KING FOR PERMISSION (2:1-8)

A. Nehemiah's Unique Opportunity (2:1-4)

1. The month of "*Nisan*" (late March/early April) revealed that Nehemiah had been in _____ and _____ for four months since the bad news from Jerusalem had reached him. (v. 1a)
2. Most likely without realizing it, this cupbearer revealed the _____ and _____ for his people and homeland on his own countenance. (v. 1b, cf. Prov. 15:13)
3. The king noticed Nehemiah's _____; and asked a pointed question, "*Why is your face sad, since you are not sick?*" (v. 2)

* Why would Nehemiah be "*dreadfully afraid*" over a simple question? (Prov. 16:14)
4. The cupbearer answered his king honestly, but he purposely and wisely did not mention _____ by name; leaving _____ out – he wanted to appeal to the _____ side of Artaxerxes. (v. 3)
5. Nehemiah had previously prayed for _____ months prior to the king's question, yet now he sought the Lord's wisdom again in an _____ so that he could give a proper response. (v. 4)

B. Nehemiah's Bold Request (2:5-8)

1. By his quick response, it is obvious that he had not only _____ for this opportunity, but he had also _____ for it; he knew exactly how he would approach the project. (v. 5)
2. Divine working and human planning are _____ necessarily contradictory; _____ does not negate the need for planning, nor does _____ negate the need for praying.
3. It seems evident that the king liked Nehemiah and asked for _____ regarding the trip; by Nehemiah's _____ response with a specific time frame indicates that he had already given this a great deal of _____. (v. 6)
4. Nehemiah wasn't vague about anything, this is because he had already prayed long and hard about the matter, through the eye of _____ he _____ potential obstacles. (v. 7-8a)
5. The signing of this decree marks the beginning of Daniel's _____ Weeks (Dan. 9:24-27); _____ - _____ of those seventy weeks (173,880 days) were literally fulfilled when Jesus entered Jerusalem in His Triumphal entry on March 30, 33 AD. (v. 8b)
6. Even though Nehemiah had already done a great deal of praying and planning, he knew ultimately any success in the matter was due to "*the _____ of my _____ upon me.*" (v. 8c, 18, cf. Ezra 7:6, 9, 28; 8:18, 22, 31)

* How can you personally apply this truth today?