

Nehemiah 2:1-20 **Artaxerxes sent Nehemiah to Judah – Wall of Jerusalem Viewed**

Nehemiah Sent to Judah

1 And it came to pass in the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was before him, that I took the wine and gave it to the king. Now I had never been sad in his presence before.

2 Therefore the king said to me, "Why is your face sad, since you are not sick? This is nothing but sorrow of heart." So I became dreadfully afraid,

3 and said to the king, "May the king live forever! Why should my face not be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' tombs, lies waste, and its gates are burned with fire?"

4 Then the king said to me, "What do you request?" So I prayed to Elohey Shamayim (the God of heaven).

5 And I said to the king, "If it pleases the king, and if your servant has found favor in your sight, I ask that you send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers' tombs, that I may rebuild it."

6 Then the king said to me (the queen also sitting beside him), "How long will your journey be? And when will you return?" So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time.

7 Furthermore I said to the king, "If it pleases the king, let letters be given to me for the governors of the region beyond the River, that they must permit me to pass through till I come to Judah,

8 and a letter to Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, that he must give me timber to make beams for the gates of the citadel which pertains to the temple, for the city wall, and for the house that I will occupy." And the king granted them to me according to the good hand of Elohay (my God) upon me.

9 Then I went to the governors in the region beyond the River, and gave them the king's letters. Now the king had sent captains of the army and horsemen with me.

10 When Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite official heard of it, they were deeply disturbed that a man had come to seek the well-being of the children of Israel.

Nehemiah Views the Wall of Jerusalem

11 So I came to Jerusalem and was there three days.

12 Then I arose in the night, I and a few men with me; I told no one what Elohay (my God) had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem; nor was there any animal with me, except the one on which I rode.

13 And I went out by night through the Valley Gate to the Serpent Well and the Refuse Gate, and viewed the walls of Jerusalem which were broken down and its gates which were burned with fire.

14 Then I went on to the Fountain Gate and to the King's Pool, but there was no room for the animal under me to pass.

15 So I went up in the night by the valley, and viewed the wall; then I turned back and entered by the Valley Gate, and so returned.

16 And the officials did not know where I had gone or what I had done; I had not yet told the Jews, the priests, the nobles, the officials, or the others who did the work.

17 Then I said to them, "You see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lies waste, and its gates are burned with fire. Come and let us build the wall of Jerusalem, that we may no longer be a reproach."

18 And I told them of the hand of Elohay (my God) which had been good upon me, and also of the king's words that he had spoken to me.

So they said, "Let us rise up and build." Then they set their hands to this good work.

19 But when Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite official, and Geshem the Arab heard of it, they laughed at us and despised us, and said, "What is this thing that you are doing? Will you rebel against the king?"

20 So I answered them, and said to them, "Elohey Shamayim (The God of heaven) Himself will prosper us; therefore we His servants will arise and build, but you have no heritage or right or memorial in Jerusalem."

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Facts Revealed:

Nehemiah Sent to Judah by King Artaxerxes [Nehemiah 2:1-10]

- ✧ Nehemiah was grieved in his heart after he received the report regarding the desolation of Jerusalem and the plight of the remnant of the Jews in Judah. [Nehemiah 1:1-4]
- ✧ The sorrow showed in his face as he performed his duty as cupbearer to the king. He had never been sad in the presence of the king before so the king asked him why he was sad. Nehemiah told him it was because of the report of the desolation of the city of his father's tombs. [Nehemiah 2:1-3]
- ✧ The king asked what Nehemiah would request, and Nehemiah asked to be sent to Judah to rebuild the city. [Nehemiah 2:4-5]
- ✧ The king asked how long Nehemiah would be gone, and Nehemiah set him a time and asked for letters for the governors beyond the River authorizing him passage to Judah and material for the rebuilding project. The king granted his request and sent captains of the army and horsemen with him. [Nehemiah 2:6-9]
- ✧ Nehemiah gave the king's letters to the governors beyond the River. Sanballat and Tobiah were deeply disturbed that someone had come seeking the well-being of the Children of Israel. [Nehemiah 2:10]

Nehemiah Views the Wall of Jerusalem [Nehemiah 2:11-20]

- ✧ Nehemiah made a secret night time tour of the walls of Jerusalem. [Nehemiah 2:11-16]
- ✧ Nehemiah encouraged the Jews to build the wall of Jerusalem to remove their reproach. [Nehemiah 2:17-18]
- ⊕ Sanballat and Tobiah mocked and challenged the work. [Nehemiah 2:19]
- ✧ Nehemiah affirmed his confidence in Elohey Shamayim and informed his antagonists that they have no part in Jerusalem. [Nehemiah 2:20]

This is the same answer that caused antagonism against those who came to build the Temple with Zerubbabel when the people who had been brought in-to the land by the king of Assyria wanted to help with the building of the Temple. [Ezra 4:1-5]