



Background

- 586 BC - Jerusalem was conquered by the Babylon king, Nebuchadnezzar
- The glorious temple built by Solomon was destroyed
- Jerusalem walls were reduced to heaps
- Israelites became slaves and deported to Babylon

Background

- Many deported Israelites served in foreign countries
- Nehemiah was a cupbearer in the court of the Persian king, Artaxerxes
- The book of Nehemiah was written at about 445 BC (140 years after the destruction of Jerusalem)

Seek God's Mind



Key characteristic of
a leader:

A **PASSION** for the
things of God

Seek God's Mind

- Jerusalem represented the city of God (symbolic of God's presence)
- The destruction of Jerusalem
 - signified God's departure
 - the removal of His covering over Israel

Seek God's Mind

- Nehemiah sought help from other human resources but showed his inner dependence on God
- His prayers show a leader who knew God's heartbeat and responded in a biblical way that found favour with God

Seek God's Mind

- The success of Nehemiah's campaign:
 - his ability to know the mind of God from His Word
 - request God to act on his behalf
- Nehemiah did not accept human perspective as the final verdict to the future of Israel
- The greater the crisis, the more we need to isolate ourselves to seek the mind of God

Wait for God's Timing

- The month of Kislev is December (Neh. 1:1)
- The month of Nisan is April (Neh 2:1)
- From Kislev to Nisan is a period of 4 months

Wait for God's Timing

Nehemiah's responsibilities as cupbearer:

- taste the food of the king
- administrate the king's court
- manage the king's schedule
- oversee the operation of the royal kitchen

Wait for God's Timing

- Nehemiah was waiting for the right time, at the right place and with the right people
- He was waiting for the Kairos moment to bring about the turning point
- King Artaxerxes had passed a law decreeing that Jerusalem would not be rebuilt (Ezra 4:21)
- A royal decree could not be changed unless the king himself would reverse it

Wait for God's Timing

- Nehemiah's request could bring his own death sentence as he was going against a decree
- Waiting upon God:
 - a demonstration of our faith in God to move on our behalf
 - let God determine the timeline of events
 - God is still in charge and we have to walk in tandem with Him

Plan for Success

- The benefits for the 4 months of waiting upon God outweighed the time lost in the process
- Nehemiah was prepared to give the king the details required for the job to be done

Plan for Success

- Nehemiah had taken 4 months of silent waiting to do his background homework
- Nehemiah had his plans and details all ready for the king to support his mission
- One of Nehemiah's key success factors – ability to plan

Plan for Success

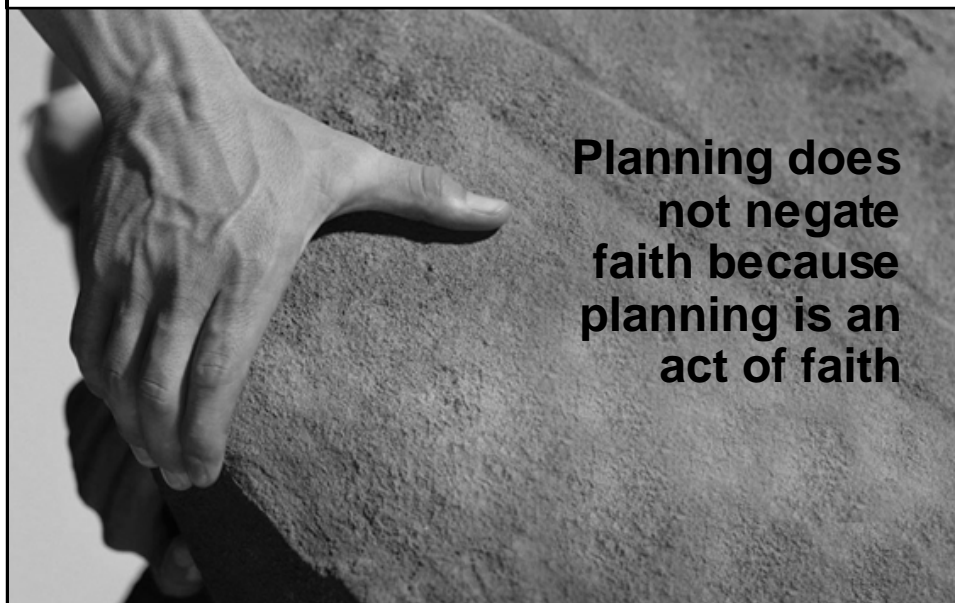
Luke 14:28-30 (NIV)

²⁸ *"Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it?"*

²⁹ *For if he lays the foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him,*

³⁰ *saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.'*

Plan for Success



Plan for Success

Proverbs 16:1, 3 (NIV)

¹ To man belong the plans of the heart, but from the Lord comes the reply of the tongue.

³ Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed.