

**MISSION
IM/POSSIBLE**

The Holy Pause

**The words of Nehemiah son of Hakaliah:
In the month of Kislev in the twentieth year,
while I was in the citadel of
Susa, Hanani, one of my brothers,
came from Judah with some other men,
and I questioned them about the Jewish
remnant that had survived the exile, and
also about Jerusalem.**

They said to me, “Those who survived the exile and are back in the province are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been burned with fire.”

When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven.

Nehemiah 1:1-4

Background: Israel is in exile

- Some are allowed to return**

- Nehemiah has stayed**

Options:

1. He's OK. Feel the pain. Do nothing.

**2. Feel the pain. Seek the Kingdom
of God.**

The plan:

1. See and feel the pain

2. Pray and Fast: the Holy Pause

3. Do something about the pain

The Holy Pause

In the month of Nisan in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was brought for him, I took the wine and gave it to the king. I had not been sad in his presence before, so the king asked me, “Why does your face look so sad when you are not ill? This can be nothing but sadness of heart.” I was very much afraid,

but I said to the king, “May the king live forever! Why should my face not look sad when the city where my ancestors are buried lies in ruins, and its gates have been destroyed by fire?”

**⁴The king said to me, “What is it you want?”
Then I prayed to the God of heaven,**

Nehemiah 2:1-4

Three Big Lessons:

- 1. Don't forget the habit of the Holy Pause**
- 2. Don't expect to know the answer before you ask the question**
- 3. Don't let difficulty stop you**

I went to Jerusalem, and after staying there three days I set out during the night with a few others. I had not told anyone what my God had put in my heart to do for Jerusalem. There were no mounts with me except the one I was riding on.

By night I went out through the Valley Gate toward the Jackal Well and the Dung Gate, examining the walls of Jerusalem, which had been broken down, and its gates, which had been destroyed by fire.

Then I moved on toward the Fountain Gate and the King's Pool, but there was not enough room for my mount to get through; so I went up the valley by night, examining the wall. Finally, I turned back and reentered through the Valley Gate. The officials did not know where I had gone or what I was doing, because as yet I had said nothing to the Jews or the priests or nobles or officials or any others who would be doing the work.

Then I said to them, “You see the trouble we are in: Jerusalem lies in ruins, and its gates have been burned with fire. Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, and we will no longer be in disgrace.”

Nehemiah 2:11-17

The Response:

**Based on the gracious hand of God let us all
work together.**

I also told them about the gracious hand of my God on me and what the king had said to me.

They replied, “Let us start rebuilding.” So they began this good work.

Nehemiah 2:18