



The Time is Now
"Action"
12th February 2017



Overview

Sunday was the second message in the new series entitled "The Time is Now." Last week we saw how Nehemiah prayed that he would be able to go to Jerusalem and rebuild the walls (Nehemiah 1:1-11). This week we see that Nehemiah is allowed to go Jerusalem and the work is started.

In Nehemiah's day, Israel has lost its voice, influence and place in the world. The church in New Zealand today mirrors Israel's dilemma. What will it take to recover?



Getting to Know You

What did you think of the theme park in Henderson starting up? Would you take on a project that size? Why or why not?



Digging Deeper

The king gave Nehemiah permission to go to Jerusalem, but this didn't mean that everyone agreed with the work.

When Nehemiah arrived in Jerusalem he investigated the problem first hand (2:11-15).

1. Why does he delay informing others of his plan after he know the size of the problem (2:16-17)? What are some parallels between the story about the owner of the entertainment park in Henderson and Nehemiah's leadership so far?
2. Read verses 2:4, 8, 18-20. God's providence is a key theme in the passage.

Providence, noun: 1. *an influence that is not human in origin and is thought to control people's lives*; 2. *divine providence or guidance*; 3. *God conceived as the power sustaining and guiding human destiny*.

How does Nehemiah show he is very aware that the community's success is dependent on God's help (e.g., note the repeated phrase "the good hand of my God was on me")?

3. Pastor Steve said some people would rather 'stay on the couch' with an attitude that says **"if it's meant to happen, God will make it happen."**

What does Nehemiah's prayer (1:8-9) say about the people's individual responsibility for sin and about God's promise to restore the people? Compare this to what the Apostle John says about excuses we make for sin. (1 John 1:8-9)

In what ways are you unwilling to obey God's word? What do you think would happen if you renewed your commitment to His promises today?

4. Chapter 3 lists workers and their work on the wall. What is difficult and enjoyable about working with others for a common goal?



Taking it Home

Nehemiah was a man of prayer and action and he was fully aware the success of the community depended on God's help and the people's willingness to obey the Lord.

Personal: 'Me and My/Our God' 'The Holy Spirit and Me/Us'

- Do I know God promises? Do I understand His word and what it says enough to remind God of his promises? (cf. 1:8-9 in his prayer)
- Do we understand that the success of our church community is totally dependent on God's favour and guidance? Do we see that our willingness to obey his word is a catalyst for His intervention?

Relational: 'My God-given Responsibility to Others'

- To others in the church community at MABC. Am I willing to work alongside others in doing God's work?
- To people who don't yet know Jesus. Am I willing to get alongside and ask people what they believe about Christianity or ask them to church events?
- When facing obstacles does my life demonstrate confidence in the Lord that my work colleagues and neighbours can see?

(suggest some of these to reflect on this week)



Prayer

Thank the Lord for each person in your group. Pray that we would be all willing to obey God's word and grow spiritually this year as we get going in the work he has for us to do.