

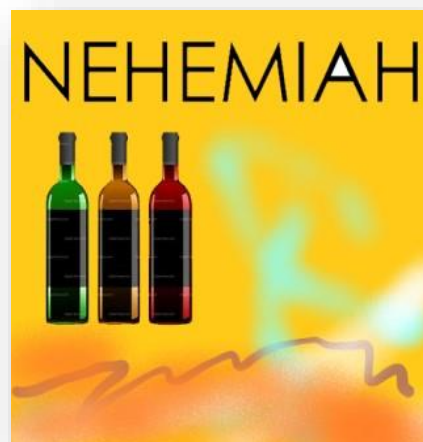
NEHEMIAH 2 vs 1

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The Book of Nehemiah originally was one book shared with Ezra; certain Greek manuscripts separated the two prior to the time of Origen and Jerome. Hebrew manuscripts kept them together until 1448. Nehemiah was a very gifted and capable man. His patriotism was infectious, moving men to leave their harvest in the field, in order to make the grueling journey back to Jerusalem. His integrity and humility made him stand out as a leader living at the highest level of trust. He attained fame as the cupbearer to King Artaxerxes of Persia.

The commission of Artaxerxes,



¹ And it happened in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, that wine was placed before me: and I lifted the wine, and gave it to the king. Now previously I had never been sad in his presence.

² For this reason the king asked me, Why is your face sad, seeing you are not ill? This is nothing but sadness of heart. Then I was dreadfully afraid at this,

³ and said to the king, May the king live forever! And why should my face not be sad, when the city where my fathers' graves are lying waste, and its gates have been burned with fire?

⁴ Then the king said to me, What request do you make? So I prayed to 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, please send me to **Judah, to the city of my fathers' graves, that I may rebuild it.**

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

⁷ I also said to the king, If it pleases the king, let me have letters to the governors west of the Euphrates River, that they will let me pass until I reach Judah;

⁸ and a letter to Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, ordering him to give me timber to make beams for the gates of the building which is part of the House, and for the wall of the city, and for the house where I will reside. And the king granted me, according to the good favor of my God on me.

⁹ When I reached the governors west of the river, I handed them the king's letters. (the king also sent with me some army officers and calvary).

¹⁰ But when Sanballat of Horon and Tobiah the slave to those of Ammon, heard this, it grieved them sorely that a man had come seeking the welfare of the children of **Israel.**

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¹¹ So I reached Jerusalem, and after being there three days,

¹² I arose during the night, I and a few men with me; I did not tell anyone what God had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem: nor was there any animal with me, except the animal that I rode on.

¹³ And I rode out in the night by the Valley Gate, toward the dragon spring, and to the Dung Gate, to inspect the broken walls of Jerusalem, and its gates burned with fire.

¹⁴ Then I passed on to the Fountain Gate, and the king's pool: but there was no room for the animal that was under me to ride.

¹⁵ So I went on that night by the brook, and inspected the wall, then I turned back, and entered by the Valley Gate, and so returned home.

¹⁶ And the guards did not know where I went, or what I did; nor did I tell it to the Jews, or the priests, or nobles, or rulers, or to the rest who did the work.

¹⁷ But I said to them then, You see the dilemma that we are in, how Jerusalem lies waste, and its gates are burned with fire. Come, and let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, that we are no longer ridiculed.

¹⁸ Then I told them of the kind favor of my God which was on me; also the words the king spoke to me. So they said, Let us start and build. So they set their hands bravely for this good work.

¹⁹ But when Sanballat of Horon, and Tobiah the slave of those of Ammon, and Geshem the Arabian, heard it, they laughed at us, despising us, and said, What are you doing? Will you rebel against the king?

²⁰ But I answered and said, The God of heaven, He will prosper us; so we His servants will start and build. But there is no property, no rights, no memorial for you in Jerusalem.

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