

Preparation¹ Nehemiah 2:11

INTRODUCTION:

1. Moses had forty years of preparation in the wilderness of Midian.
2. Paul spent three years in Arabia.
3. The disciples were commanded, “stay in the city until...” (Luke 24:49).
4. Now Nehemiah spends three days in retirement before entering a work that will require all of his powers.

DISCUSSION: This brief respite gave Nehemiah time...

I. To look around.

- A. Jerusalem was unknown to him.
- B. He was not acquainted with the exact state of affairs of the city.
- C. He could have made inquiries concerning the spirit of the people, the vigilance of the enemies of the people, and the numbers, character and wealth of the people.
- D. Knowledge is power.

II. To look forward.

- A. Nehemiah could see the difficulties and the way to overcome them.
- B. With God as his Guide, he was neither optimist nor pessimist.
- C. Anticipating difficulties, he could be prepared for them.

III. To look within.

- A. Motives were tested. The heart was probed.
- B. The challenges before him would be very trying to Nehemiah’s faith.

IV. To look up.

- A. Contemplating his frailty and relying on it alone would have completely unnerved him.
- B. Nehemiah had to turn from personal impotence to infinite strength.

CONCLUSION:

1. From penitence to prayer to confidence to hope
2. Such preparation is necessary for all who would achieve great works for God.

¹ Taken from “Preparatory Retirement” in *The Preacher’s Complete Homiletic Commentary on the Book of Nehemiah*, Booth, Goodman, and Gregory, eds. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, reprinted 1974), 9:454, 55. Adapted by Andy Kizer (09/22/2012).