

ALL CHRISTIAN'S FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL

IMMITATING THE LEADERSHIP OF NEHEMIAH -1

It is unfortunate that many in the Ministries today do not have specific method or strategy of their own for improvement in their given responsibilities. Instead, they tends to treat with contempt, others initiatives that seems challenging to their passive roles. Notwithstanding the nature of ones responsibilities in the Ministry, there is need to give ones attention to serious meditation on method for an improved operation. The achievement however tells of the efficiency of such method.

Nehemiah is one of the most inspiring leaders in the Bible. At times his methods seem somewhat *vigorous*, but they were used by God to achieve spectacular reforms in the life of his nation in an amazingly short time. An analysis of his personality and methods discloses that the methods he adopted were effective only because of the quality of his own character.

HIS CHARACTER

The first impression a reader gains from this straightforward story is that Nehemiah was a man of prayer. For Nehemiah, prayer was an ordinary part of living and working. Prayer was his first reaction on hearing the plight of emigrants in Jerusalem. Nehemiah was no stranger at the throne of grace (Nehemiah 1:4, 6; 2:4; 4:4, 9; 5:19; 6:14; 13:14, 22, 29).

He showed courage in the face of danger. "Should a man like me run away? Or should one like me go into the temple to save his life? I will not go!" (6:11). Such fearlessness would inspire any discouraged people. His genuine concern for the welfare of others was so obvious that even his enemies noticed it (2:10). He expressed his concern in fasting, prayer and tears (1:4-6). Nehemiah identified with his people in their sorrows and in their sins: "I confess the sins we Israelites, including myself and my father's house, have committed against you" (v. 6).

Nehemiah exhibited keen foresight. He knew that opposition was sure to arise, so he secured letters from the king for safe passage and for the resources to accomplish the task, “to make beams for the gates of the citadel... and for the city wall” (2:8). He carefully planned his strategy. Through all his adventures and boldness, there runs a strain of caution. He did not jump into the work immediately upon arrival, but waited three days to appraise the situation (2:11). And when he did set to business, he did not hold a tell-all press conference, but kept his goals largely secret, even doing reconnaissance under cover of night.

Nehemiah could make clear decisions. He did not put off the tough call, but cut to the heart and made a judgement. And his decisions were impartial; he did not play favourites. When censure was needed, he gave it to officials and executives as well as to workers (5:7). Nehemiah was uncommonly empathetic. He listened to grievances and took remedial action (4:10-14; 5:1-13). He let people “weep on his shoulder.” He sympathised with others. He was a realist; he understood the mechanics of the real world. “*We prayed to our God and posted a guard day and night*” (4:9).

He accepted responsibility with the intention of following through on all assignments, the pleasant ones and the dirty ones, until the job was done. Nehemiah was a vigorous administrator, a calm crisis manager, a fearless initiator, a courageous decision-maker and a persevering leader. He was resolute in the face of threats and vigilant against treachery – a leader who won and held the full confidence of his followers.