

MINISTERING TO THE SAINTS

SERVICES	2 MARCH	9 MARCH
CHILDREN'S CLASSES	Sui Lin, Priscilla, Josephine, Shirley & Ai Lin	Sui Lin, Priscilla, Josephine, Shirley & Ai Lin
USHERS	MARY YEOW & WEN KYE	PENNY & PAULINE
BIBLE STUDY	YEOW Leadership Lessons from the Kings of Israel & Judah	YEOW Leadership Lessons from the Kings of Israel & Judah
SERMON	ENG KIM LENG King Ahab (1 Kings 16:29 - 22:40)	RICHARD LEE Four Small Wise Creatures (Prov. 30:24-28)
SONG LEADING	WEN LIANG	YEOW CHIN KIONG
OPENING PRAYER	MAHIBAN	EDWARD LOW
SCRIPTURE READING	DANIEL LIM	OOI CHONG HAI
LORD'S SUPPER	JOVIN & CHRIS LEOW	YONG ENG LIM & ALVIN GOH
COLLECTION	RENGA	CHRIS LEOW
ANNOUNCER	YEOW	CHARLIE CHAN
CLOSING PRAYER	RON YING	FRANCIS LAI
CHORES	AMY LIM	AMY LIM

PORTFOLIOS OF CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR 2008

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BENEVOLENCE***EDIFICATION***EVANGELISM

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A weekly handout for members of
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SUNDAYS:
9.30 AM
BIBLE STUDY
SUNDAY SCHOOL
10.30 AM
WORSHIP
2.30PM
MANDARIN WORSHIP

FRIDAYS:
8.00 PM
BIBLE STUDY

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that



CHALLENGING QUERY #465 What can we learn from the life of Nehemiah? Yeow Chin Kiong

As a part of Divine Revelation which equips a child of God for every good work (II Tim.3:16-17), the book of Nehemiah is God's priceless gift to every Christian who aspires to be a leader and to every Bible teacher who wants to expound God's Will on the subject of effective leadership. There are in Nehemiah's life-record as many principles and practices for us to emulate as can possibly be found in any modern textbook on leadership.

The story begins with Nehemiah being "cupbearer" to the Persian king (Neh.2:1),- a position of influence and honor in the Persian royal court, and one which he was to forego in the interest of performing his duty to God - at a time when Mediterranean monarchs freely used foreign labor and expertise, much as the Egyptian Pharaoh utilized Joseph as administrator and the Babylonian monarch had Daniel as an advisor of sorts.

Nehemiah lived about a generation after 536 BC, when the Jews living in exile in Medo-Persian territory beyond the Tigris-Euphrates Valley were allowed to return to Jerusalem and the Israelite territory they had been taken away from during Babylonian imperial reign since 606 BC. The initial returnees had restored some semblance of pre-Exile life and worship in Jerusalem but the hardly-completed restoration of the city-walls had been left unattended and was symbolic of the people's unfinished work and incomplete devotion. Nehemiah's calling and unwavering focus was to, "... build the wall of Jerusalem, that we may no longer be a reproach" (Neh.2:17), and the

STATISTICS FOR 24 FEBRUARY 2008

CONTRIBUTION	RM1,741
BIBLE STUDY	40
YOUTH / VISITORS CLASS	7 / 3
WORSHIP ASSEMBLY	60
FRI - BIBLE STUDY (22 FEB)	25
MANDARIN WORSHIP	10
MANDARIN CONTRIBUTION	RM284

But there was no one like Ahab who sold himself to do wickedness in the sight of the LORD, because Jezebel his wife stirred him up. And he behaved very abominably in following idols, according to all that the Amorites had done, whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel.

1 Kings 21:25-26

people's response was to, "set their hands to this good work" (Neh.2:18). Throughout the project life-span and beyond, Nehemiah exhibited many traits of good leaders.

Firstly, he was moved by **concern** (Neh.1:4) and **constancy of purpose**. Sustained and unwavering motivation is of immense importance for leadership. It makes a leader ignore fears for his personal safety and unprofitable distractions and temptations which draw him away from his obligations and responsibilities. *Concern* for others is a greater motivation than self-interest,- or at least should not be a greater concern than self-interest,- but the obedience to God's Will must override both (Lev.19:18; Matt.19:19;6:31-33). Nehemiah had nay-sayers from the start (Neh.2:19; 4:1-11), but he would not give in nor falter, instead taking practical steps to diffuse possible threats to the final achievement of his objective (Neh.2:20; 4:13-23). Only *constancy of purpose* enabled him to address the internal distractions (such as the oppressive corruption practiced by Jews upon Jews, Neh.5:1-19) and external threats (such as the plot to accuse Nehemiah and his co-workers of conspiratorial and rebellious intentions; Neh.5:1-9) which threatened to scuttle the project.

Interestingly, there was no special Divine calling for Nehemiah and no miracle to call his attention to the task that needed his involvement, as there had been for many patriarchs and prophets. Nehemiah merely reacted to his feelings of devotion to God's holy city and his disappointment at the news that it was in disrepair and near-ruin (Neh.1:1-4). Here was a man who knew his duty well,- and was prepared to fulfill it!

Secondly, Nehemiah possessed **courage** and **confidence**. The very act of appealing to his master, the Persian king, for both permission for leave from his court duties to undertake his task and for the monarch's written support of it (Neh.2:1-8) required inestimable *courage*. Nehemiah himself admitted to being afraid (Neh.2:2). But the king's patronage was necessary for the task (Neh.2:18), as very quickly became evident when Nehemiah's detractors suggested that his project was an act of rebellion against the king (Neh.2:20). Nehemiah's anticipation saved his project from failing before it began!

Nehemiah's *confidence* was clearly not in himself and his abilities but in the Lord, with Whom he was constantly in communication through prayer. He prayed at every juncture of the project, making sure first and always that he would spare time and attention to ensure that the Jews kept all of God's commandments. He prayed before the project began (Neh.1:5-11), just before he presented his wishes to the king (Neh.2:4), when he was opposed and ridiculed by foreigners of influence in the community (Neh.4:4-5) and when these enemies of the project conspired to ruin it (Neh.4:9, 6:9)

Thirdly, Nehemiah exhibited **consistency**, **continuity** and **comprehensive-ness** in his leadership, addressing all the major issues of worship. Even though the people's spiritual and moral instruction and regulation were not directly related to his project, Nehemiah knew that such was crucial in ensuring its and every other success (Deut.28:1 to 30:20). Hence, having completed the project of rebuilding the city walls, he proceeded with other actions necessary to maintain the integrity of the people's worship of God. He restored the system of tithes for the Levites and appointed "treasurers" who would administer them (Neh.13:10-14). He also enforced the sanctity of the Sabbath by locking Jerusalem's gates to foreign traders throughout the seventh day (Neh.13:15-22). He also enforced the Law of Moses' ban on mixed marriage (Neh.13:23-31). Indeed Nehemiah 13 is a leader's Key Performance Indicator for his master to evaluate ("Remember me, O my God, for good", Neh.13:31, also 5:19, 13:14 and 13:22). Nehemiah could bring his report card to God with a justifiable sense of accomplishment!

SJ NEWS UPDATE

OUR GUESTS LAST WEEK

Sun - Soon Hong, Angel Pang, Mr Gopi and Mr Khoo & Stephanie (SJ's guests) * Ekeh Josiah (Yau Kong's guest) * Crystal & Marco (Shirley's guests) * Pauline Robinson (Kelly's guest) * Mr & Mrs Philip George, Sam & Matthew (Mary George's brothers and sis-in-law)
Mandarin - Ming Ming (Wei Kwan's guest)

OUR VISITORS LAST WEEK

Eri - Allan & family (Malacca)
Sun - Allan & family (Malacca) * Mary George (Canada)* Goe Soon (DU) * Tze Wei, Yen Nee, Win Win & Steven (Klang) * Chris Lopez (KL) * Karen & Yik Min (JB)
Mandarin - Candy (Kuantan) * Kwans (Klang)

PRAYER REQUESTS : For the health of: Doris Chan (KL), Francis, Katherine, Frank Pierce, Mahiban, Gary, Mr Chiah Tee Sang (Sis Tee's brother-in-law), Ah Ngen (Han's brother), Steven How (*Daybreak* printer) * Santhi and family * Yik Min's grandmother *DiPalmas' work in India * Charlie DiPalma's eyesight and Leela's & Sarojini's health *

AWAY FROM US THIS MORNING: Charlie, Katherine & Ai Lin in Perth * Richard on work assignment in JB

HAPPENINGS THIS WEEK: Eng's home fellowship at 8pm, Tuesday, 4 March 2008 & Chans' home fellowship at 8pm, Wednesday, 5 March 2008

CHERAS OUTREACH: First worship service at 6pm Sunday, 2 March 2008. Members in the vicinity, please attend to encourage the work there. Refer to Richard.

UPCOMING PROGRAMMES

1. Barry Hatcher will be preaching to us on Friday & Sunday 28 & 30 March 2008
2. AGM 16 March - all are requested to attend to conform with the requirements of the Societies Act.
3. Health talk on allergy by Dr See on 12 April organized by Ladies Fellowship
4. Evangelism seminar 1 May 2008