

“The God Of New Beginnings”
STEPS TO STARTING OVER
(Nehemiah 1:1-4)
May 1, 2016

INTRODUCTION:

- **MIRACLES SERIES:**
 - OUR NATURAL INCLINATIONS often SLANT US towards a certain way of thinking about things
 - We think POSITIVELY when EXTERNAL CIRCUMSTANCES ARE FAVORABLE
 - We think NEGATIVELY when they aren't
 - When we think about MIRACLES, and we're in NEGATIVE CIRCUMSTANCES we may conclude, *“Yeah, but it can't happen to me”*

- **Starting Out:** a very exciting time!
 - New Relationship
 - New Business
 - New Venture of any kind...
- Filled with HOPEFUL ANTICIPATION
 - Attitude of Opportunity
 - Certain “healthy” fear; but a “Joy” anticipating a dream come true
 - Something about POSSIBILITIES of achieving POTENTIAL

- **STARTING OVER:** a slightly “different” situation
 - New Relationship, Business, Venture of any kind...
 - POTENTIAL is replaced by PROBLEMS
 - JOY of an ANTICIPATED FUTURE is replaced by DREAD fueled by past DEFEAT, BROKENNESS, AND LOSS...

NOTE:

IT'S ONE THING TO ANALYZE, SCRUTINIZE AND TALK ABOUT ALL THE PROBLEMS WE MAY BE FACING IN ANY SITUATION; IT'S ANOTHER THING TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THEM!

TITLE: “The God of New Beginnings: Steps to Starting Over”

STEP 1: SNATCHING VICTORY FROM THE JAWS OF DEFEAT:(v3)

- Take an HONEST LOOK AT CURRENT CONDITIONS:
- It was a SEASON of BAD NEWS for SURVIVORS OF A CRISIS
- **v3**
 - a ‘survivor’ mentality - “I’ve got little or nothing left”

- In **TROUBLE** = sad, unhappy, miserable (Neh. 2:2 ...like Nehemiah)
- you come to **FEEL LIKE YOUR SURROUNDINGS**
 - the GATES and WALLS are burnt from FIRE
 - YOU feel like you're BURNED OUT by the TRIAL caused by the ENEMY
- **DISGRACED** = reproach, shame, taunting
 - emotionally wounded; feelings of shame, embarrassment: VOICES taunting
 - Voices of enemy, others, our own - taunt us relentlessly

NOTE:

TO YOU, LIFE LOOKS AND FEELS LIKE YOUR PRESENT SURROUNDINGS - A SITUATION REFLECTING THE IMPACT OF THE ENEMY'S ACTIONS; CIRCUMSTANTIAL REMINDERS OF THE ENEMY'S TACTICS....

CRUCIAL TIME: STARTING OVER IS VERY DIFFERENT FROM STARTING OUT

- **WHAT BOTHERED NEHEMIAH WAS THE REALIZATION THAT, "IT WASN'T SUPPOSED TO END LIKE THIS!"**
- **SOMETHING INSIDE HIM "TWISTED" BECAUSE HE KNEW GOD HAD VICTORY PLANNED FOR HIS PEOPLE SO DIFFERENT FROM THEIR PRESENT EXPERIENCE**
- **NEW REALIZATION: "WHEN GOD WANTS TO START OVER, HE LOOKS FOR THE PERFECT MATERIALS TO USE:"**
- **HE USES BROKEN GATES, BURNT STONES AND A REMNANT OF SURVIVORS**
- **TO GOD: THESE ARE "PERFECT CIRCUMSTANCES FOR A COMEBACK."**

STEP 2: REACTION MUST BE FOLLOWED BY RESPONSE:(v4)

- He **WEPT, MOURNED AND FASTED**
 - There is a time to grieve over how things got this bad
 - There is a time to fast; sadness, spiritual grieving, pouring your heart out to God
 - **TO EVERYTHING THERE IS A SEASON AND A TIME TO EVERY PURPOSE UNDER HEAVEN**
 - **THIS WAS HIS REACTION TO ALL THAT HAPPENED**
 - **BUT HE NEEDED TO TURN HIS "WHEN I HEARD" TO "THEN I SAID"(v5)**

NOTE:

WE CAN'T LIVE ON IN A 'REACTION MODE' FOREVER! WE MUST *TRANSITION* TO A "RESPONSE MODE" AT SOME TIME. KEY: FOR CERTAIN DAYS...

SOMETHING INSIDE US HAS TO TURN AROUND: OUR ATTITUDE, EMOTIONS AND ENERGY HAS TO BE TURNED TO COMMITMENT TO A RESPONSE ABOUT WHAT WE'VE BEEN REACTING TO!

NOTE:

IT TAKES TIME, ENERGY, EFFORT TO MOURN, WEEP, LAMENT! IT'S EXHAUSTING! WE NEED TO USE THAT EMOTIONAL AND PHYSICAL "CAPITAL" TO INVEST IN CHANGE; A TURN-AROUND!

MAKE AN INTERNAL DECLARATION: THE TIME FOR MOURNING IS OVER; THE TIME TO ACT AND RESPOND IS NOW!

STEP 3: START OVER WITH GOD!(v5)

- **Stop** REHEARSING the enemy's RESUME
- **Start** DECLARING GOD'S NATURE, CHARACTER AND PROMISES
- HE IS **GREAT, AWESOME, COVENANT-KEEPING**

GREAT = in HIMSELF - exceedingly bigger

AWESOME = awe-inspiring in his ACTIONS!

COVENANT-KEEPING = walls, gates and stones may fail, BUT GOD'S UNFAILING AND COVENANT-KEEPING LOVE NEVER FAILS!

NOTE:

GOD DOESN'T USUALLY LOOK FIRST TO THE UP AND COMERS WHEN HE WANTS TO DO A GREAT WORK; HE LOOKS FOR THE DOWN AND OUTERS! GOD USES YOUR LAST LEG, YOUR LAST OUNCE OF COURAGE, YOUR MUSTARD SEED OF FAITH AS HIS NEW "POINT OF THE SPEAR" OF VICTORY IN YOUR LIFE! OUR "LAST THINGS" ARE GOD'S FIRST THINGS!

WE NEED TO ADOPT GOD'S PERSPECTIVE:

Ephesians 2:6 (NLT)

6 For he raised us from the dead along with Christ and *seated us with him in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ Jesus.*

STEP 4: TRANSITION FROM 'VICTIM' TO 'VICTOR' MINDSET:(v11)

- Prayer must TRANSITION from reminding God of what the enemy has done, TO BELIEVING GOD FOR WHAT HE HAS PROMISED TO DO
- **v8** ...REMEMBER YOUR WORD TO MOSES (TO JESUS, TO ME...)
- **v10**... THESE PEOPLE BELONG TO YOU - OUR IDENTITY IS NOT IN OUR CIRCUMSTANCES, OUR ASSETS, OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS, **OUR IDENTITY IS IN YOU! YOU ARE OUR FATHER AND WE ARE YOUR CHILDREN - YOU WILL NOT LEAVE US AS ORPHANS!**

STEP 5: FIRMLY ESTABLISH WHAT YOU'RE BELIEVING GOD FOR!

- "...Please grant me success today..." IN WHAT?
- HE HAD A PRAYER BECAUSE **HE HAD A PLAN!**
 - HE WAS GOING TO THE KING FOR **PROVISION, PROTECTION AND PERMISSION**
 - THIS WAS HIS INTENTION!
 - HE WASN'T GOING BLINDLY, HOPING FOR WHATEVER TO HAPPEN

NOTE:
WHAT ARE YOU BELIEVING GOD FOR?

Mark 10:51 (NLT)

51 "What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus asked. "My Rabbi,[a]" the blind man said, "I want to see!"

NOTE:
ASKING, SEEKING, KNOCKING IMPLIES A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF INTENTIONALITY!

ASK FOR MY NAME, SEEK MY ADDRESS, KNOCK ON MY DOOR AND IT WILL BE OPENED TO YOU!

KNOW GOD'S PROMISE; DECLARE POSSESSION OF IT BY FAITH; BELIEVE THAT YOU RECEIVE IT AND YOU SHALL HAVE IT!

Mark 11:24 (NLT)

24 I tell you, you can pray for anything, and *if you believe that you've received it*, it will be yours.

BELIEVE: = an ACTION that proceeds from God's INBIRTHING of FAITH. Being PERSUADED of the Lord; to be CONVINCED about it

RECEIVE: = an ACTION of taking hold of something; actively accepting what is offered; emphasizes the willingness and assertiveness of the one believing.

NOTE:

Nehemiah needed PERMISSION, PROTECTION AND PROVISION AND HE INTENDED TO ASK AN EARTHLY KING FOR IT; BUT HE SECURED HIS PLAN

**WITH THE HEAVENLY KING AND MOVE FORWARD BY FAITH AND RECEIVED
WHAT HE WAS BELIEVING FOR!**

CONCLUSION:

- **ARE YOU READY TO TRANSITION FROM VICTIM TO VICTOR TODAY?**
- **CAN YOU IDENTIFY WITH BURNT STONES AND BROKEN GATES TODAY?**
- **ARE YOU READY TO REALIZE THAT YOU'RE JUST WHAT GOD IS LOOKING FOR TO ACCOMPLISH HIS PLANS IN YOUR LIFE?**
- **WHAT ARE YOU BELIEVING GOD FOR TODAY? YOU SHALL HAVE IT!**