

# Moved to Act

By Justin Morton

What would you do if your home was unprotected from outsiders? Would you just leave your home as is, or would you do whatever was necessary to ensure your home was protected, even if it was inconvenient for you?

When Nehemiah learned of the situation in Jerusalem and how the city was still in ruins because the walls were broken down and the gates were destroyed by fire (Neh. 1:3), he was heartbroken. Those were his people and Judah was where his ancestors were buried (Neh. 2:3). He couldn't just sit back, pretend he didn't know what was happening and do nothing.

After months of prayer and fasting, Nehemiah went before the king and requested a leave of absence in order to travel hundreds of miles back to Judah and to rebuild (Neh. 2:1-8). With just a quick reading of the text it may be easy for us to miss the significance of Nehemiah's request. First, he was willing to appear sad in heart before the king which was forbidden. Second, he was willing to make some pretty bold requests of the king for provisions (papers for safe passage and timber for the rebuilding project). Third, he was willing to give up a position many people would love to have in the king's court. Being the cupbearer in the king's court was a great honor and one only for those who were considered trustworthy. Most likely with this position came access to private information and considerable wealth (Neh. 5:14-18).

Why would Nehemiah want to put his life on the line and go before the king and make such bold requests? Why would Nehemiah allow his life to be inconvenienced by the happenings back in Jerusalem? It appears he was so deeply concerned about the people back in Jerusalem, he had to act.

What moves you to act? Are you moved to act out of concern for what's going on around you or are you only moved to act when and if it is convenient? Nehemiah's concern for Jerusalem and her people led him to take action in spite of the inconvenience it demanded. May we all be moved to act courageously, even when it's an inconvenience to our lives.