

You Can Be a Difference Maker

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TED Treasury Advisory
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In the month of Kislev, in the twentieth year, while I was in the citadel of Susa, Hanani, one of my brothers, came from Judah with some other men, and I questioned them about the Jewish remnant that survived the exile, and also about Jerusalem. (Nehemiah 1:1-2)

**When I heard these things, I sat down
and wept. (Nehemiah 1:4)**

**“That’s all I can stand, and I can’t stand
no more.” (Popeye the Sailor)**

Characteristics of a Difference Maker

1) Holy Discontent – “That’s all I can stand, and I can’t stand no more.”

I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven. (Nehemiah 1:4)

In the month of Nisan in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was brought for him, I took the wine and gave it to the king.” (Nehemiah 2:1)

Activists versus Contemplatives

I rebuked them and called curses down on them. I beat some of the men and pulled out their hair. I made them take an oath in God's name." (Nehemiah 13:25)

Characteristics of a Difference Maker

- 1) Holy Discontent** – “That’s all I can stand, and I can’t stand no more.”
- 2) Urgent prayer** – Nehemiah spent four months praying before doing anything else.

And because the gracious hand of my God was upon me, the king granted my requests. (Nehemiah 2:8)

When Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite official heard about this, they were very much disturbed that someone had come to promote the welfare of the Israelites. (Nehemiah 2:10)

You see the trouble we are in... (Nehemiah 2:17)

Come let's rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, and we will no longer be in disgrace. I told them about the gracious hand of my God upon me and what the king had said to me. (Nehemiah 2:17-18)

...and they began the good work. (Nehemiah 2:18)

Characteristics of a Difference Maker

- 1) Holy Discontent** – “That’s all I can stand, and I can’t stand no more.”
- 2) Urgent prayer** – Nehemiah spent four months praying before doing anything else.
- 3) Take action based on reliable information** – Make sure you get the facts

When Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite official and Geshem the Arab heard about it, they mocked and ridiculed us. “What is this you are doing?” they asked. “Are you rebelling against the king?” (Nehemiah 2:19-20)

Characteristics of a Difference Maker

- 1) Holy Discontent**
- 2) Urgent prayer**
- 3) Take action based on reliable information**
- 4) Persist in spite of difficulties & opposition**

I am carrying on a great project and cannot go down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and go down to you? (Nehemiah 6:3)

If you are doing what God wants you to do—refuse to spend a disproportionate amount of time trying to placate opposition that will never be placated—trying to please people who will never be pleased.

When Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, he became angry and was greatly incensed. He ridiculed the Jews, and in the presence of his associates and the army of Samaria, he said, “What are these feeble Israelites doing?...Can they bring stones back to life from those heaps of rubble?”

Tobiah the Ammonite, who was at his side, said, “What they are building—if even a fox climbed up on it, he would break down their wall of stones!” (Nehemiah 4:1-3)

Meanwhile, the people in Judah said, “The strength of the labourers is giving out, and there is so much rubble that we cannot rebuild the wall.” (Nehemiah 4:10)

“We will give the money back. And we will not demand anything more from them. We will do as you say.” (Nehemiah 5:12)

So the wall was completed on the twenty-fifth of Elul, in fifty-two days. (Nehemiah 6:15)

Characteristics of a Difference Maker

- 1) Holy Discontent**
- 2) Urgent prayer**
- 3) Take action based on reliable facts**
- 4) Persist in spite of opposition & difficulties**
- 5) Bring people joy**

Ezra read from the Book of the Law from daybreak to noon...and all the people listened attentively to the Book of the Law. (Nehemiah 8:3)

Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is sacred to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength. (Nehemiah 8:10)

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