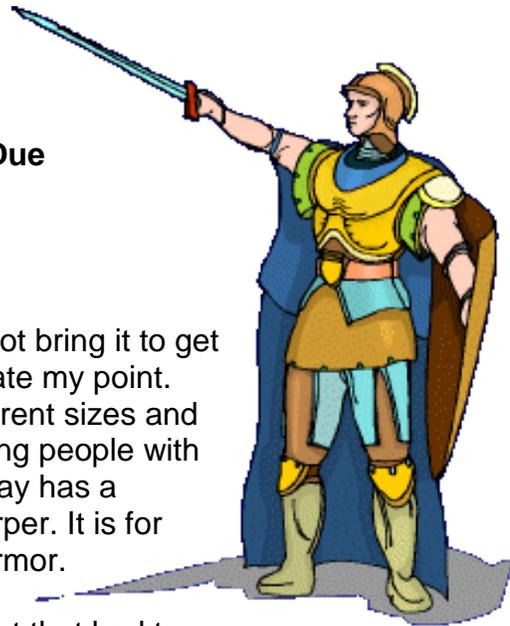


Payment Due



Method of Presentation:

Introduction:

I have my trusty sword with me today, but I did not bring it to get better control of Children's Church. It is to illustrate my point. Swords are unique weapons. They come in different sizes and shapes. This one is an Excalibur and is for fighting people with armor. Jacob, one of our other helpers here today has a Japanese sword that is smaller, lighter, and sharper. It is for hand-to-hand combat with people not wearing armor. Swords are associated with soldiers and warriors but I am going to tell you about a prophet that had to carry a sword.

Read *Nehemiah 2: 18-20* Then I told them of the hand of my God which was good upon me; as also the king's words that he had spoken unto me. And they said, Let us rise up and build. So they strengthened their hands for this good work. But when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arabian, heard it, they laughed us to scorn, and despised us, and said, What is this thing that ye do? Will ye rebel against the king?

Nehemiah had been commissioned by the Persian King Artaxerxes to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. This heathen king was giving money to rebuild what they [the Meads and the Persians] had destroyed. Nehemiah was being paid to do the desire of his heart. If you are called to preach, then there must be no greater thing than to be paid to do God's will: even when problems come up!

Message Points:

1. **Blessing of Payment.**

- † Nehemiah learned about the mess that Jerusalem was in and began to pray and fast about it for many days. The unsaved king saw how much Nehemiah wanted to do something about rebuilding Jerusalem. This heathen king opened the treasure of his kingdom to pay for the rebuilding of this Jewish city. This was a direct result of intense prayer and fasting. Never underestimate God's power!
- † Do you want God to bless your life? Do you young men that are called to preach want God to bless your ministry? Then before you pick up your sword, you better get on your knees.
- † Nehemiah knew that the Persians were world leaders and they controlled the money and power, but he didn't go write a letter to the king: He got on his knees and talked to the King of Kings! If you only desire the payment that this world can give, you will never receive much. However, if you set your affection on the Lord, he will begin to give you payments that you cannot imagine.

2. **Burden of Payment:**

- † Back *in 1 Kings 9: 3-7* the Lord explains to Solomon that the blessing that He had placed on Solomon's reign as King of Israel had some responsibilities. God said that you must put Him first, not wealth or power. If you get consumed with wanting money to buy stuff, then you have a problem with idol worship. A thief is simply an idol worshipper; worships stuff so much that he will take it.
- † God says that we are to worship Him only. He is to be first in our lives. If we can really get hold of this, then God can give us all kinds of blessings. God opened the Persian treasury to Nehemiah so that he could use it to do God's will. If Nehemiah had not been submissive to God's will, the blessing would not have come.
- † When Nehemiah organized the people in Jerusalem to rebuild the wall, then came trouble. Enemies show up and hinder the work. Now Nehemiah has to work with a shovel in one hand and a sword in the other. This is not an easy thing to do! Some of the problems that you cause while in sin will not just go away because you repented and want to serve God now. As Nehemiah and the people of Jerusalem learned, their sins and even their father's sins were going to cause them a lot of grief. They had to build and battle at the same time.

In Conclusion:

At your young age your list of sins is fairly short. If you are saved, you should do what I have been teaching and what God himself says in His Word: fall in love with him completely and live your life for him. The payment or reward will be great; not always in the ways you expect.

If you are not saved, come today. Don't wait until you wreck your life. Don't get deep into sin where your whole life consists of struggling because of the results of sin. Repent and be Born Again as Jesus says, so that a life of fellowship with our Lord is possible for you.