

Book of 2 Esdras

Chapter 2

Douay-Rheims Bible

2 Esdras Chapter 2

Nehemias with commission from king Artaxerxes cometh to Jerusalem: and exhorteth the Jews to rebuild the walls.

2:1. And it came to pass in the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king: that wine was before him, and I took up the wine, and gave it to the king: and I was as one languishing away before his face.

2:2. And the king said to me: Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou dost not appear to be sick? this is not without cause, but some evil, I know not what, is in thy heart. And I was seized with an exceeding great fear:

2:3. And I said to the king: O king, live for ever: why should not my countenance be sorrowful, seeing the city of the place of the sepulchres of my fathers is desolate, and the gates thereof are burnt with fire?

2:4. Then the king said to me: For what dost thou make request? And I prayed to the God of heaven,

2:5. And I said to the king: If it seem good to the king, and if thy servant hath found favour in thy sight, that thou wouldst send me into Judea to the city of the sepulchre of my father, and I will build it.

2:6. And the king said to me, and the queen that sat by him: For how long shall thy journey be, and when wilt thou return? And it pleased the king, and he sent me: and I fixed him a time.

2:7. And I said to the king: If it seem good to the king, let him give me letters to the governors of the country beyond the river, that they convey me over, till I come into Judea:

2:8. And a letter to Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, to give me timber that I may cover the gates of the tower of the house, and the walls of the city, and the house that I shall enter into. And the king gave me according to the good hand of my God with me.

2:9. And I came to the governors of the country beyond the river, and gave them the king's letters. And the king had sent with me captains of soldiers, and horsemen.

2:10. And Sanaballat the Horonite, and Tobias the servant, the Ammonite, heard it, and it grieved them exceedingly, that a man was come, who sought the prosperity of the children of Israel.

2:11. And I came to Jerusalem, and was there three days.

2:12. And I arose in the night, I and some few men with me, and I told not any man what God had put in my heart to do in Jerusalem, and there was no beast with me, but the beast that I rode upon.

2:13. And I went out by night by the gate of the valley, and before the dragon fountain, and to the dung gate, and I viewed the wall of Jerusalem which was broken down, and the gates thereof which were consumed with fire.

2:14. And I passed to the gate of the fountain, and to the king's aqueduct, and there was no place for the beast on which I rode to pass.

2:15. And I went up in the night by the torrent, and viewed the wall, and going back I came to the gate of the valley, and returned.

2:16. But the magistrates knew not whither I went, or what I did: neither had I as yet told any thing to the Jews, or to the priests, or to the nobles, or to the magistrates, or to the rest that did the work.

2:17. Then I said to them: You know the affliction wherein we are, because Jerusalem is desolate, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire: come, and let us build up the walls of Jerusalem, and let us be no longer a reproach.

2:18. And I shewed them how the hand of my God was good with me, and the king's words, which he had spoken to me, and I said: Let us rise up, and build. And their hands were strengthened in good.

2:19. But Sanaballat the Horonite, and Tobias the servant, the Ammonite, and Gossem the Arabian heard of it, and they scoffed at us, and despised us, and said: What is this thing that you do? are you going to rebel against the king?

2:20. And I answered them, and said to them: The God of heaven he helpeth us, and we are his servants: let us rise up and build: but you have no part, nor justice, nor remembrance in Jerusalem.