



WATCHMAN'S TRUMPET



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FROM THE MISSION DIRECTOR

Hello,

I welcome you to this new month and present to you December 2022 edition of Watchman's Trumpet. The theme of this month's edition is "Nehemiah Mission" (Part I)

Peace was a scarce commodity in Old Testament times. Nations, people and tribes were constantly at war with one another over land or material gains. The more powerful nations invade and oppress weaker ones. In those perilous times nations are always at war either trying to liberate themselves or trying to enlarge their territories; hence, the need for city walls for protection, security and safety.

Against this background could be imagined the pathetic situation of Jerusalem at the time of Nehemiah. The Temple had been rebuilt by earlier returnees under the leadership of Ezra but the city wall still retained the marks of the ruins that followed Babylonian invasion. The broken down walls and the burnt gates of Jerusalem at that time painted a picture of an impoverished, helpless, defenceless and vulnerable people who are exposed to enemy attacks and could be taken captive at will by other nations at any time.

There is a spiritual parallel of the Jerusalem situation today. In many churches, the wall of holiness that separated the church from the world is broken down. We have a world flavouring their perversions with religious

activities while at the same time the church is blending their commitment to Christ with mixed grill of worldliness and sensual pleasure.

At a time like this, God is looking for a Nehemiah that can sacrifice the convenience of royalty or worldly pleasure to save the dying world and backslidden church. God is looking for a Nehemiah that will help restore the church of Christ to her rightful place of holiness, honour dominion and glory. December 2022 edition (Nehemiah Mission Part I) and January 2023 Nehemiah Mission Part II) of Watchman's Trumpet are aimed at encouraging and empowering those who have received a Nehemiah mandate and commission, and all who are burdened about how to make God-honoring choices, live God - honoring lives and serve God acceptably and faithfully amidst 21st century secular and religious ruins and decay. May God make you a Nehemiah in this generation as you read; Welcome!

VISION FOR MISSION

"The words of Nehemiah the son of Hachaliah: And it came to pass in the month Chisleu, in the twentieth year, as I was in Shushan the palace, that Hanani, one of my brethren, came, he and certain men of Judah; and I asked them concerning the Jews that had escaped, which were left of the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem and they said unto me,



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The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire and it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven, and said, I beseech thee, O LORD God of heaven, the great and terrible God, that keepeth covenant and mercy for them that love him and observe his commandments:"
Nehemiah 1:1-5

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:"**Mathew 28:19**

Mission is born out of concern for others. All through the ages at various time men have developed specific burdens towards relieving those who are suffering, hurting or bearing the brunt of scandalous sins; theirs and that of others. Sharing these concerns with God through intercessory prayers

have often made God impart upon their hearts visions on how to solve these problems that had burdened them. History of mission is one of opportunity to serve others and be a blessing to God and humanity on particular issues affecting particular people.

This was the case with Nehemiah. He was a palace official in Shushan in the kingdom of Medes and Persia under Ataxerxes I. Hanani, one of the earlier returnees under Ezra came to visit him and brought the report that the Jerusalem still partly lies in ruins of earlier invasion. The walls remain broken down and the gates burnt. The people are in great affliction. Nehemiah was so affected by this report that he decided to give himself to prayers with fasting for a number of days to seek God's guidance, mercy and assistance.

We shall consider 3 subtopics:

1. Concern for others in need or in distress
2. Partnership with God in mitigating human suffering
3. Opportunity to serve others fundamental in missions

1. Concern for others in need or in distress

"Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the LORD hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger" **Lamentation 1:12.**

"But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd" **Mathew 9:36.**

Through Hanani's report, God opened the eyes of Nehemiah to see the vulnerability of Zerubbabel's rebuilt Temple, the plight of the remnant in the land and the returnees. What God makes us to see and what he gives us burden about are the things God is calling us to address. Ezra had built the temple but a vulnerable temple is not in the centre of the will of God. The walls must be built. This is the calling and responsibility of a Nehemiah.

Whatever report comes to us and is generating concern in our hearts call for action. This is more so if we are appropriately positioned at such a time to address the issue. Doors of mission open out of concern that we cannot pass by or that we find difficult to ignore.

"Is it nothing to you,..." **Lamentation 1:12.** Believers should show interest in the things of God and the wellbeing of His people. Whenever the walls of spiritual life, whenever the walls of prayer lives and relationship between church members and God is broken down, whenever consecration to divine service, affection for heaven, brotherly love, warm fellowship, mutual cooperation and understanding in the church are broken down; whenever affliction multiply among the people of God, whenever the people of God lose their defenses or are under reproach from the heathen around them, whenever there is little evidence of the manifestation of the supernatural in the church, there is the need for a Nehemiah. You could be the Nehemiah that your family or nation has been waiting for.

2. Partnership with God in mitigating human suffering

"O Lord, I beseech thee, let now thine ear be attentive to the prayer of thy servant, and to the prayer of thy servants, who desire to fear thy name: and prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man. For I was the king's cupbearer" **Nehemiah 1:11**



Partnership with has to do with seeking God's face about our burden in prayer and seeking Holy Spirit's guidance on every issue affecting our call. God's call comes with specific details about where, when and how. The presence of the Lord must not be assumed in missions. It must be ascertained. It is the most important factor needed for success, fulfillment and fruitfulness. Mission work requires great love for the Lord, self-denial, humility, faith and resilience.



The comfort is in Christ's promise in Mathew 28:18-20. If we go at His command to where He commanded and at the appointed time He commands, He promised to be with us always-to be till end of the world.

3. Opportunity to serve others fundamental in missions

"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" **Acts 10:38**

"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" **John 20:21**

Nehemiah saw in the report he received from Hanani an opportunity to render service and he became a missionary. His was homeland mission; a mission to his own people and his own nation. Some others are called to work on foreign field. There are also different aspects to mission. While some are called to work among children, others feel more fulfilled laboring among youth, women, rural population, primitive tribes or races other than theirs, widows, orphans, street children, elderly, physically challenged etc. while some attend mission in person others support mission efforts with their resources.

There is much to do in the kingdom such that will silence every argument in favour of idleness. If we can look around, there is something for us to do and there are things we can contribute to make God's kingdom expand and devil's kingdom to diminish.





ABOUT WATCHMAN OUTREACH MISSION

Watchman Outreach Mission as envisioned fundamentally comprises of men and women of faith who watch over one another and together watch for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Next to this primary assignment is an equally important responsibility of bringing others into the same state of watchfulness and readiness as the coming of the Lord draws near. Ours is a trans-ministerial, trans-denominational mission. Our core values include expository teaching, prayer and counselling. We train in principles and practice of Christian discipleship and equip for effective Kingdom Service.

The Lord Jesus Christ in one of His parable said “*While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept*” **Mathew 25:5**. Watchman Outreach Mission is a response of faith to this and similar warnings about events in the last days. Our response is based on the premise that prophecies, visions and revelations about the future such as the one documented in the Lord’s parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins are sign-posts by which men are warned to keep vigil to avoid disastrous end. We serve to wake up the church and men everywhere to remain alert and watch for the Lord’s return.

The Mission, based in Ibadan, Nigeria, was launched in 2009 and its maiden outing took place on the 20th November of the same year. On that day, we partnered with All Nations Evangelical Ministry (ANEM), Akobo, Ibadan for Evangelistic and Medical Mission Outreach to Idi - Ose Village on Arulogun - Olorunda Road in Lagelu Local Government, Ibadan.

In the years that followed we networked with churches and other Christian groups too to implement our mandate which include conducting gospel outreaches, discipleship training for new converts, organizing and facilitating workers and ministerial training, conducting administrative reviews in churches and ministries, writing of proposals for reforms and church growth strategies that can enhance social cohesion, improve church finances and foster overall development, unity and growth of such ministries; monitoring and/or supervision of the implementation of such reforms and strategies.

Some of these Christian groups and ministries include with Christ Apostolic Church, Oke - Ife in Ajangboju, Ibadan, Nigerian Military Christian Fellowship, Adekunle Fajuyi Cantonment Chapter in Oyo - State Nigeria, Christ Gospel Mission International, Light of Jesus Evangelistic Ministry with branches in different cities in South Western Nigeria, and Ark of Salvation Church of Christ (ASCC) with headquarters at Molade, Monatan Ibadan.

Till date, although partnered ministries change from time to time depending on the leading we receive from the Lord, we remain committed to our main purpose and vision; that of service to the church and in the world to wake up men everywhere and encourage them to remain alert and watch for the Lord’s return. Through our activities, souls had been saved, believers edified and church workers’ spiritual growth and development enhanced, all to the glory of God.

WATCHMAN PRAYER HOUR



Prayer Points - For December 2022

1. Thank God for the privilege of participating in God’s work and projects
2. Pray for all visionary leaders in the kingdom, that God will sustain their visions and continuously guide them towards fulfillment
3. Pray for all missionaries that God will encourage them with results and meet all their needs
4. Pray for grace to lead a well-ordered life
5. Pray for restoration of the church worldwide to her rightful place of holiness, honour, dominion and glory
6. Pray for concern for others who are hurting and in distress; pray that God will fill your heart with love for all His people
7. Pray for wisdom in planning and preparation for all God-ordained tasks
8. Pray for reward and blessings of participation in God’s work; pray against all hindrances

“ *men ought always to pray, and not to faint;*” **Luke 18:1**

May the Lord hear and answer all our prayers - AMEN!

Watchman Prayer Hour holds every Saturday from 10.30am - 12.00MD. We invite you to join us at our office in 78/80 Nepa (IBEDC) Building, Opposite U.I. Second Gate, Ibadan . Oyo - State Follow us on any of our Social media platforms and send your inquiries or prayer requests to any of our digital addresses.

PATHWAY TO FULLFILLMENT OF DIVINE COMMISSION

“Then the king said unto me, For what dost thou make request? So I prayed to the God of heaven. And I said unto the king, If it please the king, and if thy servant have found favour in thy sight, that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it. And the king said unto me, (the queen also sitting by him,) For how long shall thy journey be? and when wilt thou return? So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time” **Nehemiah 2:4-6.**

“Let all things be done decently and in order” **1 Corinthians 14:4-6**

Nehemiah after prayer went back to his duty post and awaits open doors and circumstantial evidence of answer to his prayers. He recognized that as a State House official occupying a sensitive post, he cannot just abandon his duty post. He recognized that God is not the author of confusion but of peace and expects all his children to be decent and orderly in all that they do. He had prayed to God for divine favour before the king so that he would be granted leave of absence to go on his mission. He continued in the path of duty until he saw clear evidence that God has answered his prayers.

We shall consider three subtopics

1. Decency and orderliness for an enduring foundation in ministry
2. The importance of preparation and planning in missions
3. Enlistment of sponsoring and support through effective communication.

1. Decency and orderliness for an enduring foundation in ministry

“Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as

supreme or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well” **1 Peter 2:13-14**

It would have been indecent and disorderly for Nehemiah to abscond or abruptly abandon his duty post to execute his commission. Many a vision has been messed up because of indecency and disorderliness of those who received it. We cannot do evil that good may abound. God expects that all important protocols of disengagement from previous posts and appointments will be duly observed in line with established principles and practices by those leaving their secular work, previous ministerial posts or assignment, family members or social connection to carry out a divine assignment. God's work, great work, done in the wrong way and at the wrong time, will still be accounted as wrong before God.

2. The importance of preparation and planning



“And I arose in the night, I and some few men with me; neither told I any man what my God had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem: neither was there any beast with me, save the beast that I rode upon. And I went out by night by the gate of the valley, even before the dragon well, and to the dung port, and viewed the walls of Jerusalem, which were broken down, and the gates thereof were consumed with fire” **Nehemiah 2:12-13**

“For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?” **Luke 14:28**

Either in spiritual or secular tasks or project, preparation and planning is very important so that such does not become abandoned projects. Nehemiah took time to prepare and plan before embarking on the project of rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem.

The earlier mentioned prayer and fasting, including his obtaining leave of absence from his employer for the duration of the assignment is part of his preparation. Besides, on his arrival in Jerusalem, he surveyed the work to be done to determine the human and material resources that will be required and how to obtain them. It has been stated that *“those who fails to plan, are planning to fail”*. God expects Christian workers and ministers to live a well ordered and well-planned life.

3. Enlistment of sponsorship and support though effective communication

“Then said I unto them, Ye see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gates thereof are burned with fire: come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach” **Nehemiah 2:17.**

Success in God's work, divine projects or assignment requires partnership with other believers or workers. Two will always be better than one. Ministers and Christian workers are expected to be good communicators, much more than the salesmen and women in the world because our own commodities have eternal values. It is very important for Christian workers and leaders to know how to effectively persuade and convince others to partner with them in the project of expanding the kingdom of God on earth.

Nehemiah clearly communicated his vision and mission to the point that all who heard him were ready to join in and contribute towards the success of the project; the evidence of effectiveness being a change of perspective from its being *“a Nehemiah project”* to becoming *“our project”*.



**PARTICIPATING IN GOD'S
PROJECT AND CONTRIBUTING
TOWARD THE EXPANSION OF
GOD'S KINGDOM**

"Then Eliashib the high priest rose up with his brethren the priests, and they builded the sheep gate; they sanctified it, and set up the doors of it; even unto the tower of Meah they sanctified it, unto the tower of Hananeel. And next unto him builded the men of Jericho. And next to them builded Zaccur the son of Imri" **Nehemiah 3:1-2**

"Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again" **Luke 6:38**

Upon arrival at Jerusalem, Nehemiah went round and did a survey before he spoke to challenge the ruler and the people on why he had come and what needed to be done. He made altar call and gave everyone opportunity to participate and contribute to the work. The priests were the first set of people to participate. They build the Sheep Gate through which the sheep for sacrifices in the temple are likely to be brought in. They set up the gate and sanctified it

We shall consider three points

1. Scriptural pattern of giving to support God's project and kingdom expansion
2. Centrality of giving in rebuilding the wall of invaded lives and ministries
3. Sure reward for faithfulness in giving to God.

1. Scriptural pattern of giving to support God's project and kingdom expansion

"And some of the chief of the fathers gave unto the work. The Tirshatha gave to the treasure a thousand drams of gold, fifty basons, five hundred and thirty



priests' garments. And some of the the chief of the fathers gave to the treasure of the work twenty thousand drams of gold, and two thousand and two hundred pound of silver. And that which the rest of the people gave was twenty thousand drams of gold, and two thousand pound of silver, and threescore and seven priests' garments" **Nehemiah 7:70-72**

The support and contribution of the people and their rulers towards the rebuilding of the wall of Jerusalem was well organized and coordinated. There was auditing and accountability. The detail of contribution and efforts were recorded and published. No effort or contribution was kept secret. In the same way honesty, faithfulness, transparency and accountability is very important in church business.

2. Centrality of giving in building th walls of invaded lives and ministries

"So built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof: for the people had a mind to work" **Nehemiah 4:6.**

"But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver" **2Corinthians 9:6-7**

Giving to God must be done as an act of worship after we have first given ourselves to the Lord 2 Corinthians 8:1-5. It is unnecessary to manipulate people to give to God. If we do and they end up giving grudgingly, they will not receive any reward. God expects us to give systematically, methodically, increasingly, regularly, willingly, cheerfully, bountifully, prayerfully and expectantly. We should give to the church; we should support church project and full-time

3. Sure reward for faithfulness in giving to God

"And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life" **Mark 10:29-30."**

The record of the life, times and contributions of those who built the wall of Jerusalem which will be continuously read till the end of time attests to the fact that there are earthly and eternal rewards for contributing and participating in God's project. Abraham gave Isaac and got a nation in return including Isaac which he thought he had lost. Moses gave up Egyptian throne and became God's reagent and ruler over God's own nation. Ruth forsook her father's house and gained royal lineage.



She was grafted into the family from which Messiah was born. A lad gave his lunch pack of five loaves of bread and two small fishes to Christ (John 6:9), twelve baskets remained after everyone have eaten. Peter in Luke chapter five gave his ship to Christ for evangelism after a fruitless night's toil, he had his ship filled with fishes much more than he could carry. We have enough evidence from the scripture and in contemporary times attesting to the fact that God will be no debtor to anyone. Whatever we sow; we shall reap Galatians 6:7. If we give, it shall be given to us (Luke 6:38). It is better to give than to receive. Those who are receiving are only relinquishing their privilege to receive from God to those who are giving to them. God loves cheerful givers Mark 10:28-30.

PROGRESS IN SPITE OF ENEMY OPPOSITION

"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? Then answered I them, and said unto them, The God of heaven, he will prosper us; therefore we his servants will arise and build: but ye have no portion, nor right, nor memorial, in Jerusalem" **Nehemiah 2:19-20.**

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:" **1 Peter 5:8**

The rebuilding of the wall of Jerusalem was not without opposition; so will be all "*Nehemiah projects*" till the end of time. In Nehemiah's case the opposition started early, soon after his arrival in Jerusalem. The enemies were unhappy that someone had come to seek the welfare and see to the well-being of the people of God.

Living a Christ-like life, faithfulness in service to God leading a growing ministry, even progress in secular engagement is sometimes like Nehemiah projects. It will be confronted with fair share of opposition. Those who back off or turn away at the slightest sign of opposition may never really achieve anything worthwhile in life whether in secular or spiritual world. We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God (Act 14:22).

The real enemy of mankind and God's people is Satan. He is the producer, director and script-writer of all that is evil and sinful. His demonic and human agents only act the part he allots to them. The good news is that the devil is a defeated foe. All that we require is the knowledge courage and obedience to enforce and maintained the victory that Christ won for us on the cross of Calvary.

We shall consider three points:

1. Certainty of opposition on the road to progress
2. Identifying the pattern of enemy opposition
3. Overcoming all opposition and on the road to progress

1. Certainty of opposition on the road to progress

"... they shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee, saith the LORD, to deliver thee" **Jeremiah 1:19.**

From the very beginning, Nehemiah faced opposition from Sambalat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite and Geshem the Arabian. They were all enemies of the Jews and were greatly upset that someone had come to help Israelites. All these three men had some local authority and could mobilize support for their anti-Jews moves and activities. New Testament revelation makes us to know that the devil is the real enemy of God's people. He is the one that plants evil thoughts in men's heart or send demons on assignment to oppose, hinder or destroy the people of God and their efforts. The devil is envious of the position of redeemed men in God's plan and he is always saddened by every attempt or effort of God's people to make progress especially in the work of the Lord.



Except we make up our minds to resist and prevail over the enemy and his agents, we may not be able to achieve any meaningful progress in life. All that will live godly in Christ shall suffer persecution (2 Timothy 3:12). Evil men and seducers will wax worse and worse, deceiving others and themselves being deceived. In the face of worsening activities and opposition by the enemy of the gospel in the end-time we are to stand firm, we are to be strong and quit like men.

2. Identifying the pattern of enemy opposition

"Now it came to pass, when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and Geshem the Arabian, and the rest of our enemies, heard that I had builded the wall, and that there was no breach left therein; That Sanballat and Geshem sent unto me, saying, Come, let us meet together in some one of the villages in the plain of Ono. But they thought to do me mischief. And I sent messengers unto them, saying, I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you? Yet they sent unto me four times after this sort; and I answered them after the same manner" **Nehemiah 6:1-4.**



"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord".
1 Corinthians 15:58

The methods of opposition faced by them which we may still face today are as follows:

- 1) Criticism
- 2) Mockery and ridicule Nehemiah 2:19,20
- 3) Plots of violence and warfare Nehemiah 4:7-9
- 4) Discouragement from pressure of work combined with outside opposition Nehemiah 5:1-5 false accusation Nehemiah 6:5-7
- 5) Invitation to compromise Nehemiah 6:1-2
- 6) False prophet and prophecies
- 7) Harassment of leaders to make them fear and sin Nehemiah 6:10
- 8) Misrepresentation of leaders' motive Nehemiah 6:5-7
- 9) Unequal yoke especially through marriage Nehemiah 6:17-19
- 10) Agents among God's people fraternizing with the enemy Nehemiah 6:17-19

Nehemiah's response and that of other saints of old in the bible has proved effective in handling every opposition to believers' progress. They are useful guidelines or principles for contemporary believers.

3. Overcoming all oppositions and on the road to progress

"No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord" Isaiah 54:17.

Nehemiah in the face of criticism prayed and continues to work. We do not join issue with critics especially those agents of the devil who cannot see anything good in what we are doing. The best way to silence critics is to be result-oriented. Nehemiah responded to mockery

and ridicule by assuring the people of God's preservation and help. He responded to warfare threat by prayer and watchfulness.

They made security arrangements to the extent that is humanly possible and committed the rest to God in prayers.

To pressure, he encouraged the people to trust God and he resolved internal conflict by wisely confronting those who have sinned with the word of God and encouraging them to repent, forsake their sins and make appropriate restitution. He confronted division by hosting peace and reconciliation conference. He denied false accusations and continues to work.



He rejected invitation to compromise with courage and faith in the lord. When misrepresented he committed his cause to God to vindicate him and prompted separation from unequal yokes by those who are agents of the enemies among the people he was leading and those



fraternizing with their enemies. He confronted injustice and oppression among the people of God and prayerfully compelled those affected to make appropriate correction. Personally lived an exemplary life that is worthy of emulation.

If we follow Nehemiah's footprints we are bound to overcome all enemy opposition and succeed all our endeavors. In the final analysis we must understand that we owe our ability to withstand, resist and overcome enemy attacks to God and His strength; and therefore all glory and adoration for the victory must go to Him and Him alone. Jesus stated *"...without me you can do nothing"*. John 15:3



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John Knox, was born near Edinburgh in 1505. He went to his local school and then to university in St Andrews, before becoming a deacon and a priest in the (Roman Catholic) Church. From 1542, Scotland was governed by Regent Arran as Mary Queen of Scots was still a baby. He passed a law that allowed people to read the Bible in their own language. He then appointed the Protestant Thomas Guilleme to preach around Scotland, and it was through his preaching that John Knox was converted.

The biggest influence on Knox's life however was George Wishart. After Wishart's death in 1546, Knox taught the sons of a number of Protestants who had captured St Andrews Castle. Some of those in the castle called Knox to become their minister. At this he burst into tears and ran off to his room because of what a responsibility he knew it would be. A few days later however he accepted the call. In the summer of 1547 French warships attacked the castle. Knox was taken prisoner, kept aboard in one of the ships and forced to row it in chains with other galley slaves. After 19 months however he was set free, and went to England where Archbishop Cranmer was working to promote the Reformation, and he was appointed as a preacher in Berwick. He attacked the Roman Catholic mass as idolatry because it was '*invented by the brain of man*' and not commanded by God. In 1551 he was invited to live in London and preach before King Edward VI.

In 1553, the Roman Catholic Mary I (also known as "*Bloody Mary*" because of her ruthless persecution of the Protestants) became Queen. Knox was now in danger so he left for Europe. He became minister in Frankfurt in Germany and then in Geneva in Switzerland where John Calvin was also a minister. In between he returned to Scotland to get married and preach, and was surprised at how far the teaching of the Reformers was spreading. In 1559, he came back to Scotland for good. The Scottish people were now ready to end Roman Catholicism once and for all. After the death of Walter Mill, Knox began to preach throughout Scotland, and God saved many people. In the autumn, he became minister at St Andrews.

Knox was better known for his prayer

MISSIONARY OF THE MONTH

JOHN KNOX
1505 - 1572



than for his other ministries. Queen Mary was reputed to have said, "*I fear the prayers of John Knox more than all the assembled armies of Europe.*" The people in St Andrews were convinced by Knox's preaching and removed all the pictures and images out of the church.

1560 was the key year in the First Scottish Reformation. The Scottish Parliament passed laws getting rid of the mass and the Pope's power in Scotland. Knox and five other men, all called John, wrote important documents such as the Scots Confession of Faith, which explained what the church believed. In the summer, Knox became minister in Edinburgh.

In December, the first General Assembly met in Edinburgh. From 1567 until he was assassinated three years later, Scotland was ruled by the Protestant Regent Moray. The second Reformation Parliament met in the same year and passed more laws in favour of the Reformation. The years from 1560 onwards saw worship simplified, evangelism, care of the poor and more education, so the ordinary people could read the Bible. Instead of the outward forms of Roman Catholicism, public worship was now based around reading, preaching and singing from God's word.

Knox continued preaching for the rest of his life and died in 1572. When he was buried, it was said that '*Here lies a man who in his life never feared the face of man*'.

SCRIPTURE FOR MEDITATION

"Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak: for your work shall be rewarded"

2 Chronicles 15:7

SONG OF THE MONTH

TO THE WORK! TO THE WORK

- To the work! to the work! we are servants of God,
Let us follow the path that our Master has trod;
With the balm of His counsel our strength to renew,
Let us do with our might what our hands find to do.

Refrain:

*Toiling on, toiling on,
Toiling on, toiling on;
Let us hope, let us watch,
And labor till the Master comes.*

- To the work! to the work! let the hungry be fed;
To the fountain of life let the weary be led;
In the cross and its banner our glory shall be,
While we herald the tidings, "Salvation is free!" [Refrain]
- To the work! to the work! there is labor for all;
For the kingdom of darkness and error shall fall;
And the name of Jehovah exalted shall be,
In the loud-swelling chorus, "Salvation is free!" [Refrain]
- To the work! to the work! in the strength of the Lord,
And a robe and a crown shall our labor reward;
When the home of the faithful our dwelling shall be,
And we shout with the ransomed, "Salvation is free!" [Refrain]

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