

# Fathers' Studies: Family Responsibilities

"...that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."

LESSON 51 OF 52

## MAKING DECISIONS

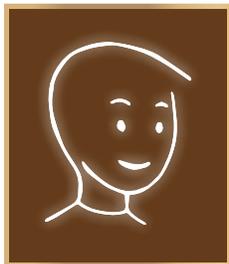
**LESSON AIM:** To show the importance of making decisions.

### KEY VERSE:

1. **JOSHUA 24:15** Joshua told the people of Israel to \_\_\_\_\_ .  
He said that he and his family would \_\_\_\_\_ .
2. **DANIEL 1:8** Daniel was one of God's great men. He \_\_\_\_\_  
not to eat the food or drink the wine of the king's court.
3. **NEHEMIAH 2:4-5** Nehemiah, who became a leader of the Jews, made a firm decision to ask the king to \_\_\_\_\_ .
4. **JOB 29:25** Job was respected by many people. He \_\_\_\_\_ and he led them.
5. **EXODUS 18:24-25** Moses took advice from his father-in-law. He \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ and made them leaders.

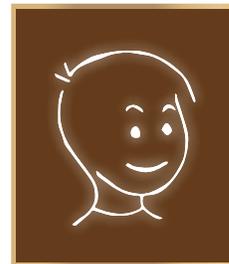
### PERSONAL NOTES:

## For You To Do



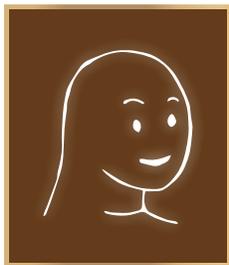
### By Yourself

Read the book of Nehemiah in the Old Testament and keep a list of the number of times that Nehemiah made an important decision. How many can you find?



### With Your Children

Tell your children the story of how Joshua challenged the Israelites to decide whom they would serve, as told in Joshua 24.



### With Your Wife

Discuss with your wife how she feels about your ability to make decisions. Ask her to help you.

Men who are good leaders are good decision-makers. A happy, well-adjusted family needs to have a clear view of where it is going. A father's decisions will help the family see where it is going.

Too often families suffer from a lack of decision making. Someone has wisely said, "It is better to take the risk of making a wrong decision than to make no decision at all." Even if you make a bad decision you can learn something from what happens. When no decision is made, the uncertainty leaves the family unsure and unhappy.

**PREPARATION** The first step in making a good decision is to gather as much information as possible. Nehemiah was a captive, far away from his home city of Jerusalem. He was very concerned about Jerusalem because it had been captured and destroyed by the Babylonian king many years before. When Nehemiah's brother came from Jerusalem, Nehemiah questioned him carefully to gather all the information he could about Jerusalem. Jerusalem had no walls of protection and was almost deserted (Nehemiah 1:1-3).

**PRAYER** Then Nehemiah took his concerns to God in prayer. He described the problem to God and reminded God of His promises for Jerusalem. Then he asked God for wisdom in doing something about Jerusalem (Nehemiah 1:4-11).

**PLANNING** Nehemiah then spent time thinking and planning. Nehemiah knew that he had to wait for the right time to ask for the king's help. While Nehemiah waited, he was busy planning how he would go ahead with the project. Planning is hard work. It takes time. It was four months before Nehemiah had a chance to speak to the king about Jerusalem.

However, when the king gave Nehemiah a chance to speak, Nehemiah acted decisively. He told the king when he would go and how long it would take him. Very wisely, he asked the king to write letters of authority for his long journey. One letter gave him authority to travel through all the provinces to Jerusalem. Another letter written by the king gave him permission to cut down trees in the royal forest. These trees would be used to make gates and buildings in the city of Jerusalem (Nehemiah 2:1-8).

When Nehemiah put his plans into action, God helped him to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem.

**THE MIND OF A MAN PLANS HIS WAY, BUT THE LORD SHOWS HIM WHAT TO DO. (PROVERBS 16:9)**

**Good leaders are decision-makers.**

**The three "P's" of decision making:**

- preparation
- prayer
- planning

## WINDOW TO LIFE

Tom and Nancy had one problem that kept coming up again and again. One year they missed doing something special for their vacation because no decision was made about what they wanted to do. Then after they finally did make a decision, it was too late to make arrangements for what they wanted to do.

Sometimes they missed inviting friends over for a special occasion like Thanksgiving or Christmas because they had not discussed it and decided what they wanted to do. Sometimes they missed special meetings at church because a decision had not been made, so that when it came time to go no one was ready.

Tom and Nancy discussed this problem with a counsellor. Nancy felt that Tom often avoided leading the family in making decisions about future plans, and she did not feel right making the decision herself. Tom admitted that he did not like making decisions. Together they agreed that when a decision regarding the family was needed, Nancy would tell Tom she needed a decision. Tom agreed that he would do his best to lead the family in making decisions.

When they followed that plan, things began to go better for the whole family.

