

Perfect Timing:

I'm preparing to preach tonight at Abner's church in sousafilip, Haiti, and have been given the scripture from Nehemiah 2:17. I will bring "the" message to a hungry, poor group of people whose homes were flooded and roofs blown off last evening in a violent tropical storm. I will speak to them of "rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem"; I will talk about a new kind of leadership; talk about the ever constant enemy; and, having confidence in God's purpose and "perfect timing."

We prepared this week to begin work on the two well projects with eager anticipation. We were disappointed to hear water depth on the west end may be as deep as 1000 feet and only special testing will make drilling possible. The journey to Dent Griern was a bit more hopeful as they have only to remove a most dangerous obstacle from atop the tower to install solar panels. The most dangerous task they have ever confronted, the work will begin the 27<sup>th</sup>. The text from Nehemiah implies "there is always an enemy!" Haitians know that well.

Conversely, our time in Haiti and the constant search for leadership that inspires change and hope and assurance in a good tomorrow has recently given us hope. At times discouraged by what seemed a cultural ethic of disparity and despondency we were circuitously lead to a development group with the acronym, AAPLAG.

Currently, eleven potential leaders are receiving three weeks of intense training up in the mountains. They tell us of learning to set attainable goals, write plans and budgets, gather information, and how to succeed in spite of opposition, for the welfare of all, not just some.

Nehemiah, took a bunch of despondent, disappointed refugees back to their "home" where walls and gates had been destroyed making all vulnerable to nearby enemies. The text says, he privately surveyed all damage; developed a tentative plan he shared with laypeople; united with them and as a confident servant leader, accepted responsibility; and, ignoring opposition, rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem.

A temperamental, man of action, who cared about the hurt people and their future, Nehemiah inspired them to work for a better life, in spite of opposition, past failures, and barriers arising at each turn. He trusted that God had a purpose for the poor people and with a sense of mission and dedication to God and God's people, he lead them to rebuild their lives.

We watch and pray that a Nehemiah is taking form as an Association for Development of South La Gonave. The situation and characteristics have me thinking a "God thing" is in process. Perhaps it is perfect timing.

.....Shirley, July 19, 2009, La Gonave, ready for a bit of rest.....