

Christian Leadership (Biblical Strategic Leadership in a Time of Crisis)

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Abstract

Tough times are a real test and a maker of great leaders. Those who emerge as great leaders are those who have a proper strategy in place for allocating scarce resources. The crisis for Christian leaders, especially church leaders in Indonesia, is the lack of ability to face adversity through the right strategy. The root of this problem is the dichotomous mindset of church leaders that separates biblical knowledge from strategic knowledge. Ironically, the Bible has all knowledge of strategy. Furthermore, it should be the basis for determining the right strategy. In constructing a strategy, leaders should collect data through surveys and observation, provide clear and concise directions, and involve the right people in their teams. They should also consider where the younger generations fit into this process. When implementing a strategy, leaders should focus on making progress through concrete steps rather than just holding events, and prioritize urgent tasks while also keeping the overall vision and spirit of the organization in mind.

Keywords: Vision, Leadership, Crisis, Strategy

I. INTRODUCTION

The question of how to put or put an elephant in the fridge has long been a brain teaser meant for riddles, jokes, icebreakers, or anything else one wants to use. However, the less-discussed part of the question is what an elephant looks like. The person holding the tusk might think it was a spear and a dangerous weapon. Others holding its trunk may mistake it for a snake and think it is poisonous. A person holding his feet could think he was touching a large, shriveled tree, while another holding his tail could mistake it for a rope for swinging. One thing is for sure: elephants represent something huge that can be misunderstood if not observed clearly.

Every 'elephant' (big thing) will not come as an easy guest and sometimes ushers in hard times in its own way. What needs to be understood is that like Goliath to

David, 'elephant' to great leaders. Rather than catastrophe or rough patches that are unpleasant to deal with, think of the 'elephant' as the maker and tester of great leaders. When a person can handle his elephant, he progresses one step closer to becoming a better leader who can navigate and lead the organization through its storms. However, it takes the right strategy to do this successfully, especially in a time of scarcity that often comes with 'elephant'. When resources are limited and tasks are piling up, one needs to be careful and consider the time and allocation of those resources. Such times and situations are usually referred to as crises. Judson J. Swihart in his book *Counseling Time of Crises* defines a crisis as an imbalance caused by threats or adjustments that are difficult to deal with (Swihart, 1987).

In an organizational context, it is very important to understand the 'elephant' with a good understanding, so as to map the nature of the 'elephant' and determine the direction of the response according to the nature of the problem. Is that a problem that needs to be addressed? Is there a need for dire intervention and sudden change? Or is it tension to be managed and communicated, rather than changed? Is there any potential for growth and improvement that could be introduced through the major changes that the 'elephant' brings? How can the 'elephant' serve as a vehicle for organizational growth in a more holistic approach? The creation of a good organization is determined by the right leadership. Thus, good leadership is the hope of every organization, including organizations that take care of spiritual problems (churches). It should be noted that like any organization in general, the church cannot be separated from leadership struggles. The church is not immune from a leadership crisis. Churches that should produce leaders who are high in faith, high in knowledge, and high in devotion are instead contaminated with various leadership problems. This is related to George Barna's research on leadership which "concludes the results of his 15-year study of global church life with the following conclusion: The church has lost its influence in the absence of effective leadership" (Sendjaya, 2004:14).

Sendjaya argues, "Many acute and chronic problems paralyze various types of church organizations for not recognizing the crisis well. Too many organizations are led by people who are poorly equipped with true leadership competencies. Some of them even have character defects. Integrity is often sacrificed for the sake of perpetuating personal ambition. At the same time, the impact of their leadership actions spread like cancer from within the organization and slowly paralyzed it. The leadership crisis is a crucial issue. However, there is a problem that is more crucial, and at the same time urgent, namely the issue of caring. Many people do not care about the fact that we do not have good leadership figures and systems. Especially biblical leadership (Sendjaya, 2004:4).

In general, the method of dealing with a crisis involves several phases, namely surviving, adapting, and innovating (winning). Organizations fall and bounce depending on how well they progress through each of these phases, and whether they can properly respond to the major changes that crisis brings. The question, however, is of a slightly different nature when it comes to Christian leadership. Christian leaders (serving in church leadership functions) and Christian organizations (such as churches and foundation-supported ministries) were found to be statistically 'lacking' in managerial roles and functions, with only 8% having the skills to plan and execute strategies effectively, 16 % of them were effective in one of them (planning or execution) and 63% of them were average or not proficient (at least in one aspect) according to a survey of nearly 700 executives in various industries conducted by the Harvard Business Review in 2013 (Relevant Leadership Academy, 2018).

Christian leaders in ministries and churches have a tendency to be less strategic despite God's strategic nature and actions and as a result, resource allocation and crisis navigation often do not go well in church circles. Moreover, the general church environment creates a debilitating environment for strategic management that can be seen in other organizations, perhaps due to the inappropriate application of the notion that the church must be moved and led by God and the Spirit. Another context says, "may we wait for God to direct and give us clear instructions on what to do next," any planning and strategy proposed by leaders, even though they may be experienced and experienced in their field of work, can be thwarted on the assumption that it is driven by man rather than inspired by God (Tuhumury, 2010:65).

It is easy to understand why strategic management does not thrive in such settings and leaders are discouraged from learning more, especially about the skill set required to deal with 'elephants.' A survey conducted in 2018 by the *Relevant Leadership Academy* found that there are nine competencies most needed by church leaders, namely leading themselves, thinking strategically, communicating, building teams, developing people, making decisions, creating harmony, simplifying things, and solving problems. Christian leaders in Christian organizations must ask themselves whether they see strategic management as a worldly act, a spiritual act, or a combination of the two.

Based on the explanation above, biblical leadership is leadership based on the word of God. Approaches and concrete examples for leading have been laid down by the Bible. Related to this, Sendjaya added, "The closer the principles, patterns, and practices of an organization's leadership are to Bible values, the more likely the principles, patterns and practices of leadership are to produce a transparent (accountable) and sustainable system. All of these dimensions are important and urgent parts that need to be presented in biblical leadership. In the context of biblical leadership, Nehemiah is present as a reference and example who provides inspiration, understanding, direction, concepts, and even boundaries regarding leadership itself. He is a successful leader. It must be admitted that Nehemiah's leadership is interesting to study and remains relevant to the needs of church leadership today.

II. METHODOLOGY

This paper uses qualitative research methods based on the internalization process and leadership studies, especially the leadership of one of the great leaders or leaders in the context of the Old Testament. In particular, researchers conducted a study of Nehemiah's leadership. It will use a biblical approach and literature research more. Given that the book of Nehemiah is too broad, the systematic presentation of this paper first begins by understanding the meaning and differences between leader and leadership. Second, recognize Nehemiah's background and calling as an effective leader and how to resolve crises in his leadership. In the last part, the researcher seeks to explore the principles and values of Nehemiah's leadership in the text and context. Based on the perspective of the purpose of this dissertation, the research will present data in the form of a description or confirmation of a theoretical concept, hypothetical questions regarding the status of the research subject, for example, attitudes or opinions, views of individuals or organizations, academic scientific reference sources, empirical data (Sugiyono, 2012:27).

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Nehemiah's Leadership Qualifications

In the Bible, there are many figures whose life can be seen as examples of Christian leadership, both in the Old and New Testaments. One such example is Nehemiah. One of the things that stood out from Nehemiah was the vision he had which made him known as a visionary leader. Because the ability that needs to exist in a leader is someone who has a vision. Without a vision, the direction of his leadership becomes irregular. Nehemiah looked far ahead. He was in exile, but he could feel what the Israelites were feeling in their home country. Vision will determine the direction of a leader to do his work and ministry. The vision that Nehemiah received was not the vision of man, but the vision of God (Nehemiah 1:5-6).

Nehemiah was a transformative leader. During his reign, Nehemiah had to face a crisis regarding the nation of Israel. Work experience that seems simple, but gives its own color in its time. As known and recorded by the Bible that he was in charge of providing wine for the king every day (Nehemiah 1:11, 2:1). He had two main tasks: the first task was to lead a group of Jews back to Jerusalem, to oversee the rebuilding of Jerusalem's walls, and to determine which families were allowed to live in the city. The second task, launched a number of social and political reforms among the Jews, including establishing the true worship of God (Nehemiah 13:4-31). Not only did Nehemiah bring the wine, but he was the first to taste the wine to make sure it was not poisoned. In fact, this task is not an ordinary task because it is very dangerous for the safety of the person concerned. However, this is precisely what earned Nehemiah the full trust of the king. Of course, maintaining trust (self-integrity) became a valuable asset for Nehemiah-whether he realized it or not-which he then received the full attention of the king; was cared for by the king's pity; and even got a special opportunity to realize his grand vision and mission (Thomas, 2015:98).

Nehemiah's leadership has its own charm and is relevant throughout the ages. In the commentary, Wycliffe expresses admiration for Nehemiah's leadership. The author or editor admits by stating, "It must be pointed out that there is no passage in the Old Testament that gives us a greater impetus to serve and a stronger zeal to do God's work than the Book of Nehemiah. The example of Nehemiah's desire for the truth of God's word, whatever the cost or consequence, is an example that is desperately needed today." Nehemiah's leadership is exemplary. He leads by involving the conscience, soul, and body. It involves a conducive environment. It involves other people and he shares leadership (sharing leadership). The principle of delegation in Nehemiah's leadership works very well. He manages the strength of human resources into a common strength. Based on this principle, the spirit of togetherness and the collaborative principle are needed so that they are not impressed or tend to just go forward and enjoy themselves (Pfeiffer and Everett F. Harrison, 2007:1163).

3.2 Leadership and Crisis

One of the realities faced in leadership is that every leader will face many crises. A crisis is an imbalance that results from a threat or an adjustment that is felt difficult to deal with. Of course, this statement will provoke various reactions to determine attitudes in managing a crisis. The progress of a leader depends on how he views the existing situation so that every crisis can be faced and from the crisis produces new things (Wirawan, 2018:34).

Having a positive view of the crisis will facilitate the two opposing sides. On the

one hand, if the crisis can be managed properly it will produce a new history in his leadership. On the other hand, a crisis can lead a person to incompetence, and ultimately frustration. Dr. P. Octavianus explains that a real leader is a leader who always sees difficulties or crises as an opportunity to discover new things in making history. Meanwhile, the leader who sees the crisis as a problem is a pessimistic leader (Tomatala, 2007:145).

In Nehemiah's leadership, the writer sees that Nehemiah faced many crises, crises from within as well as those from without. There are various crises that Nehemiah faced and the responses he had toward them. In chapter 2:9: "When Sanballat the Haronite and Tobiah the Ammonite the servant heard this, they were very upset that someone had come to seek the welfare of the Israelites. "From the start, the two of them were displeased with Nehemiah's presence. Then in chapter 2:19, it is explained that they (Sanballat, Tobiah and Geshem) began to mock and insult Nehemiah's plan. However, Nehemiah was not swayed by their words and answered wisely: "It is the God of the heavens who made us successful! We, His servants, are ready to build."

The crisis continues in chapter 4 when Nehemiah and all the people begin to build the walls of Jerusalem. In verses 1-6, Nehemiah and his people faced ridicule, but Nehemiah faced it with great scorn. Nehemiah was not provoked by emotion but he came to God through prayer. The ridicule that comes is overcome with prayer. Then verses 7-9, they face the threat of war and chaos, but Nehemiah overcomes it through prayer, and security is arranged wisely (verse 9).

In addition to the crisis above, Nehemiah experienced a fairly severe crisis, in which the people who worked began to get discouraged and experience fear. Chapter 4:10 reads: "The people of Judah said: 'The strength of the lifters has decreased and the rubble is still very much. We can't afford to build this wall.'" This was a fairly severe crisis in which the people of Judah began to become discouraged and fearful of building the walls of Jerusalem. Under these conditions, Nehemiah appeared as an extraordinary leader. He overcomes with faith and godliness, and also gives encouragement and readiness to fight the enemy through careful planning (verses 12-18).

The crisis that Nehemiah faced come from both outside and within. In chapter 5, Nehemiah is furious at the economic injustices among the Jews. Where the rich, namely nobles and officials (verse 7), oppress the poor by forcing them to mortgage their land and houses and borrow money to buy food. In some cases, the poor were forced to turn their children into slavery so that they would not starve to death (verses 1-5). Nehemiah angrily opposes this injustice (verse 6) and forces the transgressors to repent and improve themselves (verses 12-13). Nehemiah's anger at injustice and evil was godly anger because of his concern for the oppressed poor.

John Maxwell developed a leadership theory with six basic qualifications that a leader needs to have. Where this can have an influence on the group he leads. In addition, the leadership will develop effectively which brings the group to an increase. The six basic principles are an acronym for the word leader in English, namely LEADER. These principles are Learner (learners), Excellence (quality excellence), Attitude (attitude), Dreamer (has a dream), Encourager (has a passion) and Responsibility (responsibility). Nehemiah had exemplary qualifications as a leader. He is a learner (learner), has quality (excellence), has a good attitude (attitude), has a vision or dream (dreamer) (has a dream), has enthusiasm (Encourager) and is responsible (responsibility). He is a source of inspiration for leaders in all eras and time. It inspires and can be used as a reference source for Christian leadership in

today's modern era. He is a leader who has a wide impact on the people he leads (John, 2005:213).

George Barna wrote that the vision a Christian leader uses to lead people should not be a self-made vision, but a vision that comes from God. Furthermore, Barna said that the vision is a clear mental picture of a better future, which God conveys to His leaders (Barna, 1995:55). The principle that can be learned and become a reference for Christian leaders in their leadership is that a leader must have a vision. Christian leaders, whether they are leaders of Christian institutions or leaders in the congregation, must have a vision that comes from God. Sherwood G. Lingenfelter states that a goal-oriented leader shows that leader correctly understands the direction of an organization or the leadership he leads. Lingenfelter writes that goal-oriented missionaries, ministers, and laypeople are very caring and responsible people (Lingenfelter and Mavin K Mayers, 2002:84).

3.3 Leadership and God's Vision

Nehemiah was a leader who had a clear vision for his life. According to the Indonesian dictionary, vision is (1) the power of seeing or seeing; (2) the view of a problem (*KBBI*). George Barna, quoted by Sendjaya, defines vision as follows: "A vision is a very clear picture of the future that God communicates to His ministry leaders based on an accurate knowledge of God, oneself, and the environment." From the above definition, vision is a harmonious fusion or blend of three independent elements, namely: (1) God: God's will and burden, (2) Ourselves: talents and capacities that God gave, and (3) Environment: the needs of the times that God needs. In the book of Nehemiah chapter one, it is explained that Nehemiah had a vision from God. The vision was born out of a deep and needy struggle, where the condition of the city of Jerusalem is deep and its ruins and walls are left in ruins. When Nehemiah heard this, he became sad and mourned for several days (Neh. 1:4). Therefore, he began to pray intercession and asked God to intervene to help the Israelites and the city of Jerusalem. Because of his prayer, God gave him a vision in his heart (Barna, 1995: 235).

Furthermore, vision breeds integrity. Many people often talk about integrity issues, but not everyone has integrity. Christian leadership is characterized by integrity, consistency, sincerity, honesty, transparency, authenticity, and reliability, and integrity is the main characteristic of a leader. Leadership in the community requires a life of integrity. What exactly is meant by integrity? In the Old Testament book, Genesis 20:1-6, the word integrity comes from the word "tom" which means "all/complete." Meanwhile, in the New Testament, the apostle James defines integrity as perfect and complete and not lacking in anything" (James 1:4). That faith and works are one (Pfeiffer, 2007).

Nehemiah's integrity was reflected in his sincerity in building the walls of Jerusalem and his genuine concern for the welfare of others was so evident that even his enemies saw it (2:10). In addition, Nehemiah also did not use his position to take advantage and even blackmail the people as other high officials did. On the other hand, he opposed the injustice that occurred in Jewish society. When the construction process was in progress, he not only gave orders but was also directly involved in the construction. In this case, Nehemiah is a leader who has high integrity so he can be trusted. He is able to maintain his integrity even in the most unlikely of situations. His high integrity made people happy with him and Allah entrusted extraordinary things to him (Pfeiffer, 2007).

To understand Nehemiah further, there are three main principles that cause his vision to be realized, among others: first, he has a strong foundation in his faith and belief in God so that he begins and begins with God (Hebrew: lakham elohe hashamayim). It was this close and harmonious relationship with God that made Nehemiah successful. Not only that, Nehemiah's faithfulness to God's law through the law caused the change of a curse into a blessing (Chapter 13). The process of starting with God is biblical and urgent. Second, his awareness as a servant of God. Nehemiah acknowledged and realized his role and duty as a servant to God. Therefore, he declared that "we are His servants" (Hebrew: avadav ebed). Only with awareness as a servant, he is able to be humble and serve sincerely (Giawa, 2019:152).

Further explanation of Nehemiah's vision is in the context of the findings: God's VOICE. The explanation of God's VOICE is as follows; Vision – Nehemiah 1:1-3. What kind of future image does God give you that you believe will happen? Occasion – Nehemiah 2:6. How do you see the correlation between acting in God's time and being sensitive to dire situations? Inspiration – Nehemiah 2:11-12. How does God inspire you when you feel stuck? Confirmation – Nehemiah 2:7-8. How do you define God's confirmation? Empowerment – Nehemiah 2:18-20, 2:4-5. Do you believe God gives you the authority to make decisions in time of crisis?

3.4 Responding to Crisis: Biblical Strategy

In the midst of the struggle to rebuild the wall, the Israelites experienced a food crisis, and war. They complain that there is no food for their children. Unable to cope with the crisis, they are willing to let their children and relatives be sold to others and made into slaves. This situation is quite worrisome and affects their struggle to build the walls of Jerusalem properly. As a wise leader, Nehemiah had patterns in dealing with crises.

3.5 Constructing a Strategy

The first strategy is collecting data (survey and observation) and working from it (5:1-7). Nehemiah devised a careful plan and strategy by looking at the facts on the field. He was not reckless but careful and thorough. In addition, he always involves God in every plan. Nehemiah is a leading figure who has planning. A leader who had a plan was not rash. He started the plan by involving God and by using the king's power to smooth out the wall construction process. He started to pray for him, Nehemiah 1:11b (NKJV): "Please prosper your servant today by granting him to receive favor from this man.' Now I was the king's senior security advisor."

He aimed to obtain the approval of the king first, and subsequently requested letters from the governors of the regions he would be passing through on his way to Jerusalem. In addition, he requested letters addressed to the king's gardeners to acquire the necessary timber for constructing the fort's gates and city walls (2:8). When asked for how long he will leave his job, Nehemiah could immediately answer at a certain time because he had a prior plan. Nehemiah 2:6 (NKJV): "Then the king said to me (the queen also sitting beside him), 'How long will your journey be? And when will you return?' So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time."

After arriving in Jerusalem, Nehemiah did not stop to make plans, he was very careful and did not immediately do his work. In chapter 2:11 it says: "So I came to Jerusalem and was there three days." New after some day, after he carefully could evaluate state, then he started Act. Nehemiah 2:12a: "Then I arose in the night, I and

a few men with me; I told no one what my God had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem.” He collected data and facts to make plans. By having these facts and data, Nehemiah quickly divided the tasks and the order of the stages of work carried out, in the construction project, because there was careful planning beforehand.

It continued further. When Nehemiah heard that some people were planning to attack Jerusalem to cause chaos, he immediately acted and devised a good strategy. It acts by mobilizing the power of the people. Nehemiah divided his subordinates into two groups, one group would continue to work on completing the wall construction and the other would always be on guard to oversee the security of Jerusalem until the wall was completed. When the wall construction was finished, Nehemiah appointed people who could help him to guard Jerusalem (Neh. 7:1-73). This is the exact strategy that Nehemiah employs so that he succeeds.

The second is to be clear and concise in giving directions with clarity and simplicity (5:8-13). From the description, Nehemiah runs duty and great responsibility. He devised careful planning and strategy by looking at the facts on the field. He was not reckless, but careful and thorough. In addition, he always involves God in every plan. While the building process was in progress, the Israelites complained about the crisis. Hearing this, Nehemiah immediately paid attention and listened to their complaints, then looked for the cause of the crisis. After finding the root of the problem, he was very angry with the leaders and rulers who caused the Israelites to experience a food crisis in the midst of their struggle to build. When one is in trouble, ask God for wisdom to find the cause of the difficulties.

After thinking carefully, he gave a solution to overcome the problems of the Israelites. He sued the leaders and rulers who had been taking usury and taking the produce of their fields and gardens, and ordered them to return them to their owners. A simple action but provides a solution to overcome the crisis. Even though Nehemiah knew the potential for punishment, for living in Persia, he was even very close to the king. It was very risky for Nehemiah to appear before the king, asking permission to go to Jerusalem. However, Nehemiah was brave and able to face the crisis. It is evident that one of the costs to be taken into account is the bravery required to confront tasks and challenges. Courage is the quality of the mind that enables one to face danger or adversity without fear or discouragement. This is also one of the qualities or characteristics of Nehemiah as a leader. With that capital of courage, Nehemiah succeeded in carrying out his vision, namely, rebuilding the fallen walls of Jerusalem (Nehemiah 2:1).

The third is to involve the right people in the teams. Where do you see the younger generations in these steps? (5:14-19). One of the keys to success for a successful leader is to be an empowerer. The best way to empower others is to delegate tasks according to the situation, place and abilities of the people being led. Delegation is the process of handing over responsibility and authority to others. In the light of the Old Testament, the Lord showed how important delegation of work was (Num. 11:10-15) (1988, 2124). The art of delegation involves the right people at the right time. Dr. P Octavianus explains that: “A good leader recognizes the abilities and limitations and believes in the abilities of the people he will lead. Therefore, he must learn to let go of certain tasks for the people he leads to do” (Sanders, 2004:78).

The purpose of a positive delegation attitude is, first, to get other people who are capable of doing these tasks, either during an emergency or in the future. Second, with the delegation, many people are involved in the leadership task, thus preventing failures that may arise. Third, with proper delegation, the work can be much and

better (Tuhumury, 2010).

Delegation of tasks can be seen when Nehemiah began to move and place the people he led. This is obvious when he empowered other leaders such as the regent across the Euphrates and encouraged the Israelites to build the ruins of the walls of Jerusalem (Neh. 2, 3). When the wall was finished, Nehemiah appointed the doormen, the singers, and the Levites and ordered them to do their jobs. In addition, the supervision of the city of Jerusalem was handed over to Hanani so that all the work could run well (Neh. 7:1-73). From the description above, it is clear that delegating responsibility to members must be in accordance with their respective abilities. The reason is very clear. First, as a finite human, Nehemiah could not have done great things by relying on his own strength. Second, Nehemiah saw such great potential in the people he led, so he wanted to empower the existing potential. Third, Nehemiah wanted to see the people he led learn to be leaders (Tuhumury, 2010).

Nehemiah wished to avoid imposing a burden on the people for his own requirements. He was not seeking personal gain or advantage, but instead gave priority to the interests and benefits of the people. He fears God and asks God to ensure his well-being. If God calls, then the called person is accountable to God and God is responsible for the called person. God will reveal His calling with the anointing of His power accompanied by dreams that will be fulfilled. The book of Proverbs says if there is no vision/dream then the people are wild. Thus, it will bring blessings in the fields of God being served, and will also see revival in the places that are worked. Because God's work is God's field (Lay, 1988:123).

In Nehemiah 2:1 it is very clear that the walls of the city of Jerusalem will soon be rebuilt. Nehemiah stands as a leader who works and is directly related to the project at hand, by bearing some demands as a leader who works with thought, strategy, understanding, and love. The influence of Nehemiah's sincerity or determination in carrying out the construction of the wall of Jerusalem is very clear. It received a great response where the Israelites wanted to take part in the construction of the Jerusalem wall. Nehemiah realized that by forming a team and synergizing with the people around Jerusalem, they built it together, and each of them used the skills they had to do their job well. Indeed, in carrying out his duties, it does not mean that there are no problems faced by Nehemiah, on the contrary, since the beginning of the plan to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, Sanballat, Tobiah, and Ammon have shown resistance (Nehemiah 2:10). And it was these people who caused a lot of trouble for Nehemiah.

3.6 Implementing a Strategy

To implement a strategy, first, one needs to focus on steps (progress), not programs (events). In chapter 6, there is an attempt to intimidate Tobia, Sanballat and Geshem. They tried to hinder the construction of the Jerusalem Wall and tried to harm Nehemiah (verse 2). But Nehemiah remained focused on his work (verse 3). However, they continued to try to disrupt the building of the walls of Jerusalem by spreading false news about Nehemiah (verses 5-8), trying to discredit Nehemiah's name and reproaching Nehemiah (verse 13). What is even more disheartening is the presence of deceitful individuals who profess to work for the glory of God, but in reality, are aligned with God's adversaries (verse 14). Yet extraordinary was Nehemiah's actions or response to their crimes. Nehemiah always prayed and relied on God (verse 14).

Planning is a process of rational thinking and precise determination of various things to be done in the future, in an effort to achieve goals which has been

determined. Planning is the selection of various alternatives for purpose intent, policy, procedure, program, and so on. The important thing in planning is decision-making, which is the starting point that determines the direction of activities to front. Based on the above understanding, in planning there are the following elements: First, rational thinking about conjectures, estimates or calculations for the future. Second, rational thinking is not made on the basis of mere imagination, but based on the fact or data which is objective. Third, preparation or action preliminary for future activities. Fourth is the goal (Tuhumury, 2010).

Even when Nehemiah faced crises, he was not easily swayed, nor was he easily discouraged by unpleasant situations. When the walls of Jerusalem were completed in 52 days, even the enemies of the Jews had to admit that the work was done with God's help (Neh. 6:15-16). The secret is that he always relies on God and believes that God will help. Nehemiah showed courage, determination, and faith when faced with enemy resistance (Neh. 4:14). Nehemiah was sure that when His people did their part with steadfast faith, God would surely do His part. Nehemiah said: "The God of heaven Himself will prosper us" (2: 20a).

The second strategy is Urgent vs Important – to be clear about what to prioritize. Nehemiah was able to handle what had been a thorn in his waist long enough. Nehemiah knew very well what matters were urgent and important. This is what makes Nehemiah able to resolve the crisis well. He knows when to appear before the king, listen to the Israelites, formulate a strategic plan, and take action in carrying out his vision. Therefore, there is no overlap of work during his leadership. On the other hand, Nehemiah acted tough, decisive, and wise for cleansing for the sake of truth. He was disciplined but conciliatory and loving. Even though many people in the world disagreed with his actions to defend the truth, he kept on going. Nehemiah was bold and resolute in facing problems and taking action against them. Nehemiah was free from collusion, corruption, and nepotism, as well as against egoism.

Third, what is the heart or the spirit of your organization? Church leaders must have the heart to build the organization they lead. Attitude (encourager/dynamic) is needed in the world of leadership, which is able to lift the world in a positive, constructive, and creative direction. Chris Marantika argues that encouraging leadership is a style of leadership that moves forward. The term retreat or stagnation did not appear in his mind. Faith is the basis for the belief that God leads in all aspects of his leadership. Even if there is a failure or deadlock, it becomes an opportunity for self-correction that will result in the ability to see how to move forward (Marantika, 2007:80).

Leaders who are excellent and have fresh spiritual insight must have a very special relationship with God. Church leaders must introduce principles, and values that bless the nation. John White argues that leaders who excel are not "work addicts" or "work aficionados", but leaders who work hard without being enslaved by the work. It is the leaders who dare to take a stand in their work and give their best. Leaders of excellence see work as a means to a specific goal and direct work to achieve that goal. This is what Nehemiah showed in his leadership. He worked on the construction of the walls of Jerusalem to completion. Even doing it very quickly. According to Fredy Simanjuntak, a spiritual leader should strive to do the best they can in every situation and with every person they encounter, in order to achieve the most positive outcome. This principle should be applied consistently and continuously (Simanjuntak, 2017:53).

Nehemiah persisted as a leader until the end of his reign, willing to take unpopular

paths for the sake of truth. He even rebuked those who were guilty but remained open to receiving constructive evaluations and criticisms that could improve his leadership skills. Leaders often face attacks and resistance, but it is important to recognize that the source of this resistance is the devil, and its purpose is to hinder the work of leaders. It is crucial to overcome slander and handle rumors wisely. In the world of Christian politics, rumors and defamation are unfortunately common, but it is important to remain patient and optimistic while continuing to advance planned programs. Evaluating oneself and the situation at hand is crucial in dealing with such challenges and identifying opportunities for growth.

IV. CONCLUSION

Nehemiah was an excellent strategist and planner. He is able to apply the truth. Not only is he aware of future crises, but he is also able to form plans to deal with them. He is aware of the opportunities that arise in various situations and is able to make plans according to reality. Good planning and strategy made him a formidable leader. As a result, he is able to make a change for the better. Today's leaders who are able to bring about changes are leaders who are able to carry out all designs and considerations carefully so that they produce winning strategies.

There is always a crisis in organizational leadership, and crises will occur from time to time. God, through the Bible, has something to say about this. It is the responsibility of a Christian leader to respond proactively to this crisis through strategies based on God's Word. In its implementation, the strategy helps initiation but does not negate the work of the Holy Spirit in guiding and providing timely wisdom. Biblical Strategic Leadership benefits principles and skills for all leadership functions and types in the world. In reality, crises are dangerous, but at the same time, they are opportunities for the improvement of the Biblical Strategic Leader who carries out God's mission for the welfare of His people.

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