

Standing Tall in a Slouching World: Nehemiah

Chapter 1

Standing tall in a time of crisis by bowing low in prayer

(Nehemiah 1)

Nehemiah's name; (1:1a) **Jehovah**

Nehemiah's times: (1:1b) **Nisan is March-April**

Nehemiah's place: (1:1c) **He was in the King's castle**

Nehemiah's occupation (1:11b) **He was the cupbearer**

Nehemiah's curiosity: (1:2-3) - *I asked ...*

- A. Curiosity about the **People - Exiles - surviving**
- B. Curiosity about the **Place - Jerusalem - ruined**
(see 2 Chronicles 6:36-40; 7:14)

Nehemiah's prayer:

1. (1:4) **Lamentation**
2. (1:5) **Adoration**
3. (1:6-7) **Confession**
4. (1:8-9) **Recollection**
5. (1:10-11a) **Conviction**

Chapter 2

Standing tall in a time by crisis by speaking up to power

(Nehemiah 2)

1. How was Nehemiah's prayers in chapter 1 answered by the king's first question? **The king asked him why he looked so sad. Nehemiah responded truthfully yet respectfully.**
2. What was the first thing Nehemiah did before he responded to the king's second question? **He prayed.**
3. How is the importance of prayer demonstrated in Nehemiah's interactions with the king? **God softened the heart of the king and granted Nehemiah's request.**
4. What does Nehemiah's prayer life tell us about his relationship with God? **He recognized God as the true King and he had a personal relationship with Him.**
5. The answer Nehemiah gave to the king's second question tells us what about the time Nehemiah first heard the news of Jerusalem and when the king asked him his questions? **Nehemiah had been praying and planning.**
6. Why do you think Nehemiah inspected the city walls before he spoke to the leaders in Jerusalem? **He wanted to make sure he assessed everything properly before he spoke.**
7. Who were the antagonists against Nehemiah, why were they opposed to his plan, and how did they respond to the plan? **Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem. They thought it might affect their power and prestige. They mocked them and accused them of rebellion.**
8. How did Nehemiah respond? **With truth and expressing his trust in God.**
9. What did Nehemiah encourage the Jews to do considering the response of the antagonists? **He encouraged them to take their eyes off the accusers and put it on God.**

(Chapter 3)

Standing tall in a time of crisis by working with others

(Nehemiah 3)

1. Why do you think the Lord wants us to read this chapter? What do you think the benefits of it could be. **So that we could see how everyone worked together to accomplish God's work.**
2. What are some of the ways the builders are organized? **They were organized by family and location.**
3. When Nehemiah made his previous requests of the king, he asked for help to get everything he needed to build the walls except for the builders. Why do you think he did not request that? **He wanted the Jewish people to take responsibility for it.**
4. After they finished building the walls, how do you think the people felt? **With thankfulness and pride.**
5. What was important about the way Nehemiah utilized and organized the people. **He got everyone involved, including himself.**
6. How is this chapter an example of how God has organized the church of today? **God wants to use all His people to accomplish His goals for the church.**

(Chapter 4)

Standing tall in a time of crisis by working with others

(Nehemiah 4)

1. How did Sanballat and Tobiah respond to the Jews rebuilding of the wall? **They mocked them and made fun of them.**
2. What are some parallels to contemporary culture and how people of faith are ridiculed? **They are mocked by people who claim they believe in science and not religion. People make lots of false claims about the Bible and people who believe it are misled fools, ETC.**
3. In what 2 ways did Nehemiah lead the people to respond to those who were against the rebuilding of the walls? **By having them pray and stand guard.**
4. Why was it important for the Jews to do more than pray? **God often wants to use us in more than just praying to help accomplish His will.**
5. Give some examples of how God wants to use us in more than just praying? **Helping others, volunteering, teaching, helping to organize, helping to clean, ETC.**
6. How did Nehemiah address the problem of discouragement. **He got everyone involved so they felt they were accomplishing something important.**

(Chapter 5)

Standing tall in a time of crisis by addressing actions within the ranks

3 Complaints:

1. **Verse 2:** We are hungry and need food
2. **Verse 3:** We are mortgaging our fields and vineyards (literally our own means of survival) in order to get grain
3. **Verses 4-5:** We have to mortgage our fields/vineyards or sell our children to slavery because we have already mortgaged everything we have in order to pay the king's tax

Object of the complaint:

Verses 1, 5: Our very brothers are enslaving us by taking away our livelihood, AND they are selling our children to foreign owners

Nehemia's response:

1. **Verse 6:** Anger at the actions of fellow ruling class
2. **Verse 7:** Consulted with himself (thought through issue with a level head)
3. **Verse 7:** Confronted the Nobles/rulers with their wrong doing through usury
4. **Verse 7:** Held a great assembly representing the people against the Nobles/rulers
5. **Verse 8:** Redeemed, as best they could, those sold to foreign nations
6. **Verse 8:** Revealed their money-making scheme by selling children for profit, then making profit on the selling of the children back to their families

Nehemiah's appeals to doing justly, loving mercy and walking humbly with God:

1. **Verse 9:** Reveals that this does not show fear of God to nations who hate us
2. **Verse 10:** Shows his personal example of how everyone in his household are lending money and grain
3. **Verse 11:** Appeals to their fear of God, their place among the people of God, and their responsibility to their brothers

Reconciliation:

1. **Verse 12:** Agreement to return 100% of all monies, properties, and goods
2. **Verse 12-13:** Sealed agreements with an oath to prevent them from repeating this later

Outcomes:

1. **Verse 14:** Nehemiah made king
2. **Verses 14-18:** Nehemiah did not exact from the people the governor's food allowance nor the "tax"
3. **Verses 17-18:** There was enough to daily feed the 150 Jews, officials, PLUS those were visiting from nearby nations

Application:

Zerubbabel constructs 2nd Temple, Ezra consecrates it and instructs/leads people in worship of YHWH. Shalom is noted with God's presence and group of God's people.

Nehemia constructs the walls of Jerusalem expanding Shalom for God's presence, with His people, in His place. He further went on to Navigate what Shalom among His people should be.

(Chapter 6)

The wall was almost done let's look at the final attempts of Israel's enemies to stop the rebuilding of the wall, that include deception, intimidation and character assassination. Nehemiah responds with discernment, prayer and steadfast obedience, and the Wall was Completed.

- 1) Let's look at the Enemy's tactics, Satan at work in the world then and now
 - a) Read verse 1-4, Distraction
How does Nehemiah respond,
 - (1) How are we challenged in our lives today with distractions and how can we overcome?
Share examples of your experiences
 - b) Read verse 5-9, Slander and Fear
 - (1) How does Nehemiah respond?
 - (2) How does slander and fear affect our lives today?
 - c) Read verse 10-14, False Prophecy & Religious Manipulation
 - (1) How does Nehemiah respond to the spiritual deception?
 - (2) How does spiritual deception affect our lives today?
- 2) The work is finished v 15-16
 - a) Their steadfastness and obedience get the wall done in 52 days
 - b) What happened to their enemies when they heard the wall was done?
- 3) Ongoing Pressure v17-19
 - a) Even after completion, opposition continues with letters and intimidation.
 - i) Completion doesn't mean that spiritual pressure will end, faithfulness must continue
- 4) Key Themes
 - a) Discernment vs Deception
 - b) Courage over fear
 - c) Prayer for Spiritual strength
 - d) Staying focused on God's calling
 - e) Finish well, Gentlemen it is too early to Quit