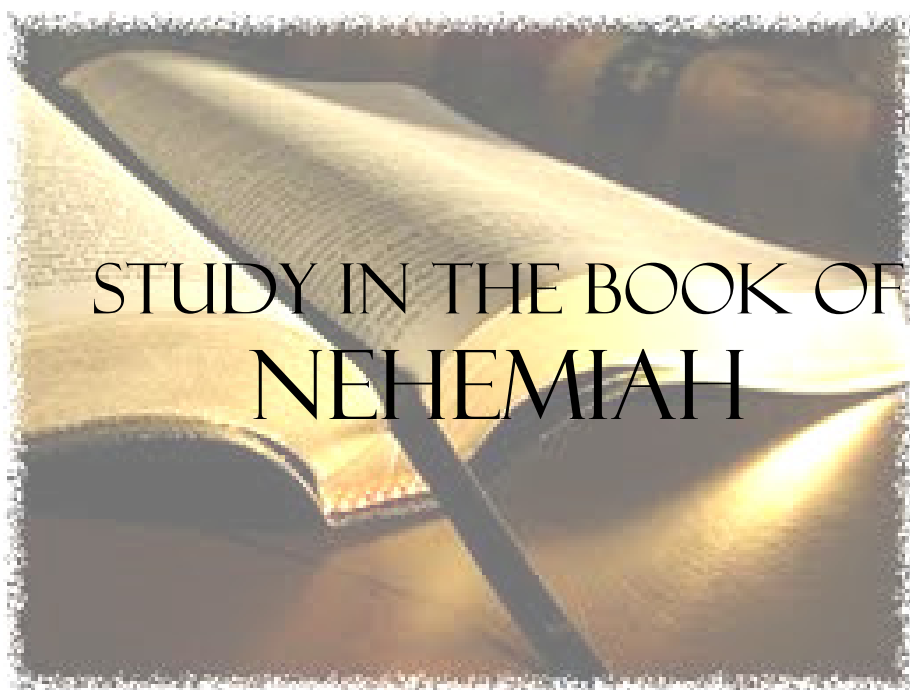


*Footprints*



CHRISTIAN RESOURCES



By: Bishop Warwick Cole-Edwardes

Footprints into Africa

## **STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH**

(Nehemiah was a dynamic and effective leader.)

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **PURPOSE**

Nehemiah is the last of the Old Testament historical books. It records the history of the 3<sup>rd</sup> return to Jerusalem after captivity, telling how the walls were rebuilt and the people were renewed in their faith.

#### **AUTHOR**

Much of the book is written in the first person, suggesting Nehemiah as the author. He probably wrote the book with Ezra as editor.

**DATE: 445-432 BC.**

#### **SETTING**

Zerubbabel led the 1<sup>st</sup> return back to Jerusalem in **538 BC**. Then in **458 BC**, Ezra led the 2<sup>nd</sup> return and finally in **445 BC** Nehemiah returned with the third group of exiles to rebuild the city walls.

There is a serious shortage of leaders in the contemporary world. Massive problems confront us:

- \* **Globally** - nuclear threats, violation of human rights.
- \* **Socially** - unemployment; conflict in individual relations; and racial violence.
- \* **Morally** - Forces undermine marriage, abortion is on demand.
- \* **Spiritually** - Spread of materialism, no doctrinal content.

#### **THE NEED FOR GODLY LEADERS IS GREAT.**

Not just mediocre leaders ... but leaders who are ambitious and adventurous for God.

We also live in a world where people don't want to get involved.

The study of Nehemiah is the story of a great leader; a man who got involved.

# NEHEMIAH

## OUTLINE

1. THE BAD NEWS ABOUT JERUSALEM (1:1-4)
2. NEHEMIAH'S PRAYER (1:5-11)
  - A. AN APPEAL TO GOD'S COVENANT FAITHFULNESS (1:5)
  - B. CONTRITION FOR THE NATIONS SINS (1:6-7)
  - C. REMEMBRANCE OF GOD'S UNFAILING GRACE (1:8-10)
  - D. A CRY FOR HELP IN TIME OF NEED (1:11)
3. NEHEMIAH GETS HIS COMMISSION (2:1-10)
  - A. HE MAKES HIS REQUEST TO THE KING (2:1-5)
  - B. THE KING GIVES HIS BLESSING (2:6-9)
  - C. EARLY SIGNS OF OPPOSITION (2:10)
4. NEHEMIAH IN JERUSALEM (2:11-20)
  - A. NEHEMIAH INSPECTS THE WALL (2:11-16)
  - B. NEHEMIAH SEEKS CO-OPERATION FOR THE TASK (2:17-20)
5. THE BUILDING OF THE CITY WALLS (3:1-6:19)
  - A. THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE WORK (3:1-32)
  - B. OPPOSITION TO THE WORK (4:1-23)
  - C. INTERNAL DISSENSION (5:1-6:14)
  - D. THE TASK COMPLETED (6:15-19)
6. EXILES WHO RETURNED WITH ZERUBBABEL (7:1-73)
7. EZRA READS THE LAW (8:1-18)
8. THE RENEWAL OF THE COVENANT (9:1-10:39)
  - A. CONFESSION OF SIN (9:1-38)
  - B. ASSENT TO THE COVENANT (10:1-39)
9. THE PEOPLE INVOLVED (11:1-12:26)
  - A. RESIDENTS IN JERUSALEM (11:1-24)
  - B. LIST OF VILLAGES (11:25-36)
  - C. PRIESTS AND LEVITES (12:1-26)
10. DEDICATION OF THE WALLS AND ADMINISTRATION (12:27-13:31)
  - A. DEDICATION OF THE WALLS (12:27-43)
  - B. THE ORGANISATION OF THE LEVITES (12:44-47)
  - C. NEHEMIAH'S FURTHER REFORMS (13:1-31)

## **MESSAGE**

Nehemiah comes across as an ideal worker for God. The key words are prayer and work. He not only prayed and worked himself, but he inspired the followers to do the same.

### **1. PRAY IN EVERY CIRCUMSTANCE OF LIFE**

- \* He prayed when he heard of the state of Jerusalem. (1:4-11)
- \* He prayed when he faced King Artaxerxes with his request to go to Jerusalem. (2:4)
- \* He prayed in the face of opposition. (4:4,9)
- \* He prayed when false accusations were made. (6:8,9)
- \* He prayed when the work was completed. (13:14)

### **2. PRAYER AND WORK GO HAND IN HAND**

- \* He surveyed the scene beforehand to ascertain what was involved. (2:11-16)
- \* He organized the work force so that everyone knew what was expected of them. (3:1-32)
- \* He inspired others to work. (2:17-18; 4:6,23)
- \* He recognized the sacredness of the work God had given him to do. (6:3)

## **APPLICATION**

### **1. BE BURDENED FOR YOUR OWN PEOPLE**

When Nehemiah received news of the tragic state of affairs in the battered city of Jerusalem he was overwhelmed by it.

### **2. BE READY FOR ACTION**

Nehemiah wisely prayed before he took action. He sought guidance first, but having received it, he was not slow to get to work.

### **3. BE PREPARED FOR OPPOSITION**

The work of God never goes unchallenged. Nehemiah found he had enemies both inside and outside the city, but he proved it is possible to triumph over all opposition.

### **4. BE AWARE OF THE DANGER OF FALLING BACK**

Nehemiah called the people together to hear God's Word and they were responsive, but when he returned to the city after an absence of twelve years he found that the people had forgotten God and that a further reformation was necessary.

# **STUDIES IN NEHEMIAH**

## **STUDY 1**

### **THE MAN WHO GOT INVOLVED**

(Nehemiah 1)

#### **INTRODUCTION**

1. **NEHEMIAH'S INQUIRY** (1:1-3)
2. **NEHEMIAH'S REACTION** (1:4-11)
  - A. **CLEAR RECOGNITION OF THE NEED** (v.4)
  - B. **PERSONALLY CONCERNED WITH THE NEED** (v.4)
    - a) **Sat down and wept.**
    - b) **Mourned and fasted.**
3. **PRAYED FOR THE NEED** (v.4-11)
  - A. **WORSHIP** (v.5)
  - B. **CONFESSION** (v.6-7)
  - C. **PETITION** (v.8-11)
4. **AVAILABLE TO MEET THE NEED**

#### **CONCLUSION**

**NEHEMIAH**  
**STUDY 1**

**THE MAN WHO GOT INVOLVED**

**1. NEHEMIAH'S INQUIRY (1:1-3)**

Jumping suddenly into his story. Nehemiah does not give us much of his previous history, but we do learn that he was the “son of Hacaliah” – nothing is known of his father and we are left to conclude that his father had been taken into captivity when Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians. Nehemiah was probably born in captivity and grew to manhood surrounded by all the corrupting influence of the ancient East – “while I was in the citadel Suza.”

His residence was the royal Palace because he was the King's CUPBEARER.

How important was Nehemiah's position? The special duty of the cupbearer was to fill the royal wine cup from the vase, which stood near the royal board and to hand it gracefully to their master, making sure that nothing was spilled. There were rituals for washing the cup and the cupbearers had to taste the wine in front of the King to confirm that it was not poisoned. When they were not serving their main duty was to guard the entrance to the royal apartment, allowing or refusing entry to at their own discretion. Even Princes of royal blood had to submit.

**Nehemiah 1:2**

New International Version (NIV): “Hanani, one of my brothers came from Judah with some other men, and I questioned them about the Jewish remnant that had survived the exile and also about Jerusalem.”

A MacDonald says, “Nehemiah began his effort with a listening ear. In contrast with much leadership that begins with the mouth, Nehemiah began his with an ear – he listened.” The answer was disheartening.

**Nehemiah 1:3**

New International Version (NIV): They said to me, “Those who survived the exile and are back in the province are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down and its gates have been burned with fire.”

WHY in such a deplorable condition?

HOW did they get into this?

The Hebrew people had once been a powerful force in the Near East. But the mighty kingdom which David had established split into two after Solomon died; Israel and Judah.

After the Babylonians defeated Judah and Jerusalem in **586 BC**, the Jews were taken into exile for 70 years. During this time the Babylonian power was broken by the Medes and

Persians. Under the new administration of KING CYRUS (**550-530**) permission was given for the Jews to return and rebuild the Temple.

- \* Under ZERUBBABEL – **538 BC** the foundations were laid; strong opposition.
- \* Under EZRA – **458 BC** – strong teaching ministry.
- \* Under NEHEMIAH – morale was low, no walls, and rich exploitation.

## 2. **NEHEMIAH'S REACTION** (1:4-11)

### **Nehemiah 1:4-11**

New International Version NIV: “When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven. Then I said:

‘Lord, the God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with those who love him and keep his commandments. Let your ear be attentive and your eyes open to hear the prayer your servant is praying before you day and night, for your servants, the people of Israel. I confess the sins we Israelites, including myself and my father’s family, have committed against you. We have acted very wickedly toward you. We have not obeyed the commands, decrees and laws you gave your servant Moses.

‘Remember the instruction you gave your servant Moses saying, “If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the nations, but if you return to me and obey my commandments, then even if your exiled people are at the farthest horizon, I will gather them from there and bring them to the place I have chosen as a dwelling for my Name.”

‘They are your servants and your people, whom you redeemed by your great strength and your mighty hand. Lord let your ear be attentive to the prayer of this your servant and to the prayer of your servants who delight in revering your name. Give your servant success today by granting him favour in the presence of this man.”

“I was cupbearer to the King.”

Now in these verses there are four very significant important factors that are true in the lives of competent spiritual leaders:

#### **A. HE HAD A CLEAR RECOGNITION OF THE NEED** **(v.4) “When I heard these things.”**

Nehemiah was not pre-occupied, he did not live in a dream world opposed to reality. He ASKED what the condition is, and found it to be miserable.

**Swindol says: “The person who is a real leader has a clear recognition of the needs.”**

**WHAT ABOUT YOU?** Are you aware of the needs around you?

- \* **These are the qualities which we need to have when God calls us to be spiritual leaders.**

**B. PERSONALLY CONCERNED WITH THE NEED**

**Redpath says: “Let us learn this lesson from Nehemiah: you never lighten the load unless first you have felt the pressure of your own soul. You are never used of God to bring blessing until God has opened your eyes and made you see things as they are.”**

Look at Nehemiah.

**(v.4) “When I heard these things, I sat down and wept.”**

He felt a storm of emotion – the walls down, the gates burnt, morale was low, rich exploiting, and people spiritually down.

**WHAT ABOUT YOU?** – your family, the youth, your country.

Nehemiah was personally concerned with the need.

**(v.4) “For some days I mourned and fasted.”**



# **STUDIES IN NEHEMIAH**

## **STUDY 2**

### **OUTLINE**

#### **TAKING COMMAND**

(Nehemiah Chapter 2)

#### **INTRODUCTION**

##### **1. PETITIONING THE KING**

- A. TO SEND HIM TO REPAIR THE RUINS IN JERUSALEM (v.1-4)
- B. TO GIVE HIM LETTERS OF SAFE CONDUCT (v.7)
- C. TO GIVE HIM LETTERS FOR TIMBER (v.8)

##### **2. ARRIVING IN THE CITY (v.9-11)**

- A. OPPOSITION
- B. REST
- C. INVESTIGATION

##### **3. INSPECTING THE RUINS**

##### **4. RALLYING THE PEOPLE**

- A. RECOGNIZE AND ACKNOWLEDGE THE UNHAPPY SITUATION (v.17a)
- B. EXHORTS THE PEOPLE TO ACT (v.17b)
- C. ENCOURAGES THEM (v.18)

#### **CONCLUSION**

**NEHEMIAH**  
**STUDY 2**

**TAKING COMMAND**

**INTRODUCTION**

In **Chapter 1** we read of the conditions in Jerusalem. The gates were broken down, the wall had collapsed, and the people were discouraged.

In response Nehemiah wept and began to pray that God would open the door for him to go back to Jerusalem, and his prayer was answered.

He asks permission to go back home and repair the wall.

In Chapter two we have a record of how Nehemiah takes the command.

**1. HE PETITIONS THE KING (v.18)**

The King noticed that Nehemiah looked sad, so he explained to the King the situation, and he asks the King for three things.

**A. TO SEND HIM TO REPAIR THE RUINS IN JERUSALEM (v.5)**

It was a huge task. So the King asked him how long it would take.  
Nehemiah gives him a time.

**B. HE ASKS THE KING TO GIVE HIM LETTERS OF SAFE CONDUCT (v.7)**

**C. HE ALSO ASKS FOR LETTERS FOR TIMBER (v.8)**

He would need a lot of timber to repair the gates.

**“Because the gracious hand of my God was upon me, the King granted my requests.”**

The letters are powerful, the reason being that Nehemiah did nothing without prayer. Furthermore he had carefully planned how he would do it.

**2. ARRIVING IN THE CITY (v.9-11)**

The long journey from Babylon is over. As soon as he arrived in Jerusalem three things happened.

**A. OPPOSITION**

Then Sanballat (the Horonite) and Tobiah (the Ammonite Governor) were very unhappy that he had come.

**B. REST**

He had some rest for three days. (v.11)

God’s great principle is that you work for 6 days and rest for one day.

**C. INVESTIGATION**

He then looked very carefully over the walls. The buildings were inspected, problems anticipated. Nehemiah first investigated.

**3. INSPECTING THE RUINS (v.12-16)**

One night he got on his donkey and he went right around the city.  
It gave him a clear picture of what needed to be done.

**4. RALLYING THE PEOPLE (v.17-20)**

Having prayed much, having carefully inspected the situation, he now is ready to call the people.

**A. RECOGNISE AND ACKNOWLEDGE THE UNHAPPY SITUATION (v.17a)**

They all realized how big the job before them was.

**B. HE THEN EXHORTED THE PEOPLE TO ACT (v.17b)**

**“Come let us rebuild the wall.”**

**C. HE ENCOURAGED THEM (v.18)**

**“I also told them about the gracious hand of my God that was upon me.”**

**CONCLUSION**

Nehemiah was a brilliant leader – he has prayed much, carefully inspected the situation, and now he encourages the people that the work can be done.

A leader is somebody who can get somebody else to do what you want to have done, because he wants to do it.

**NEHEMIAH**  
**STUDY 3**

**OUTLINE**

**MISSION IMPOSSIBLE – HOW TO ACCOMPLISH IT**  
(Nehemiah 3)

**INTRODUCTION**

1.    **THE NORTH WALL** (v.1-5)
  - A.    THE SHEEP GATE (v.1-2)
  - B.    THE FISH GATE (v.3-5)
2.    **THE WEST WALL** (v.6-12)
  - A.    GOLDSMITHS AND PERFUMERS (v.8)
  - B.    NOBLES OF JERUSALEM (v.5)
  - C.    YOUNG WOMEN (v.12)
3.    **THE SOUTH WALL** (v.13-14)
  - A.    THE VALLEY GATE (v.13)
  - B.    THE DUNG GATE (v.14)
4.    **THE EAST WALL** (v.15-31)
  - A.    THE FOUNTAIN GATE (v.15-25)
  - B.    THE WATER GATE (v.26-27)
  - C.    THE HORSE GATE (v.28)
  - D.    THE EAST GATE (v.29-30)
  - E.    THE INSPECTION GATE (v.31)

**CONCLUSION**

**NEHEMIAH**  
**STUDY 3**

**MISSION IMPOSSIBLE - HOW TO ACCOMPLISH IT**  
(Chapter 3)

**INTRODUCTION**

Every pastor faces grave challenges, but Nehemiah shows us how we can accomplish the impossible.

**1. HE BEGINS WITH THE NORTH WALL (v.1-5)**

**A. THE SHEEP GATE (v.1-2)**

It was called the sheep gate because the people would bring all the sheep that would be sacrificed there.

**B. THE FISH GATE WAS NEXT (v.3-5)**

This is where they bought and sold fish. And he repairs the gate and the wall until the whole northern part was completed under his direction.

**2. THE WEST WALL (v.6-12)**

The people responded and it was rebuilt. Everybody got involved.

**A. THE GOLDSMITHS AND PERFUMERS (v.8)**

They had not worked on walls before, but Nehemiah used them.

**B. NOBLES OF JERUSALEM (v. 5)**

**C. YOUNG WOMEN GOT INVOLVED (v.12)**

It was fantastic to see how Nehemiah delegated the work – coordinated it all.

**3. THE SOUTH WALL (v.13-14)**

**A. HE BEGINS WITH THE VALLEY GATE (v.13)**

**B. THE DUNG GATE (v.14)**

The Dung gate was where all the rubbish was thrown and all the sewerage.  
MALKIJAH – He volunteered to clean the sewerage.

**4. THE EAST WALL (v.15-31)**

**A. HE WENT TO THE FOUNTAIN GATE (v.15-25)**

**B. THE WATER GATE (v.26-27)**

**C. THE HORSE GATE (v.28)**

**D. THE EAST GATE (v.29-30)**

**E. TO THE INSPECTION GATE (v.31)**

**CONCLUSION**

This chapter is magnificent, and it teaches us four great lessons on leadership:

**A. THE WORK OF GOD MUST ALWAYS BE CARRIED OUT IN AN ORDERLY FASHION**

There must be order.

**B. THERE WAS DELEGATION**

Everybody was involved under Nehemiah's leadership.

**C. HE INVOLVED ALL KINDS OF PEOPLE**

Priests, perfume workers, men, women etc.

**D. NOTHING IS GRATER THAN HARD WORK!**

**NEHEMIAH**  
**STUDY 4**

**OUTLINE**

**WHAT TO DO WHEN UNDER ATTACK**  
(Chapter 4)

**INTRODUCTION**

**1. OPPOSITION BY MOCKERY (v.1-6)**

**A. THE PROBLEM (v.1-4)**

- a) What are these feeble Jews doing?
- b) Will they restore the wall?
- c) Will they offer sacrifices?
- d) Can they bring the stones back to life?

**B. THE RESPONSE (v.4-6)**

- a. Prayer (v.4-5)
- b. Continued with the task (v.6)

**2. OPPOSITION BY CONSPIRACY (v.7-9)**

**A. THE PROBLEM (v.7-8)**

**B. THE RESPONSE (v.9)**

- a) Prayer
- b) Posted a guard

**3. OPPOSITION BY DISCOURAGEMENT (v.10-23)**

**A. THE PROBLEM (v.10-14)**

- a) Loss of strength (v.10)
- b) Loss of vision (v.10)
- c) Loss of confidence (v.10)
- d) Loss of security (v.11-12)

**B. THE RESPONSE (v.13-23)**

- a) Workers armed and placed strategically (v.13)
- b) Encouraged to trust God for protection (v.14)
- c) Assigns his personal servants to help (v.16)
- d) Builders and burden bearers carried weapons (v.17-18)
- e) An alarm system was instituted (v.18b.-20)
- f) Night time security strengthened (v.22)
- g) Nehemiah exercised constant vigilance (v.23)

**CONCLUSION**

**NEHEMIAH**  
**STUDY 4**

**WHAT TO DO WHEN UNDER ATTACK**  
(Chapter 4)

**INTRODUCTION**

Under the dynamic leadership of Nehemiah great changes were taking place in Jerusalem. The wall was going up. The gates were being repaired and slowly the people were being encouraged. All of this was because of Nehemiah's leadership.

But whenever God is working there is opposition.

These two chapters will help us greatly as we learn how to cope with opposition and criticism.

**1. OPPOSITION BY MOCKERY (v.1-6)**

As the work was going ahead the enemy became angry.

**A. THE PROBLEM (v.1-4)**

The leader of the opposition was Sanballat and he mocked Nehemiah, he said:

**a) What are these feeble Jews doing?**

This would have hurt the Jewish people – when they were called feeble.

**b) Will they restore the wall?**

Sanballat wanted to hurt Nehemiah, and to make him feel that the task was too big.

**c) Will they offer sacrifices?**

This hurt Nehemiah greatly, because it mocked his religion.

**d) Will they bring the stones back to life?**

These four questions were carefully chosen to mock Nehemiah's work. In v.4 the other enemy Tobiah said:

**“If even a fox climbed on it he would break down the wall.”**

**B. THE RESPONSE (v.4-6)**

Nehemiah's response was fantastic!

**a) Prayer (v.4-5)**

The more they mocked the more he prayed.

**b) Continued with the Work (v.6)**

Nothing can take the place of persistence.

**2. OPPOSITION BY CONSPIRACY (v.7-9)**

The opposition does not stop, it gets hotter. All the neighbouring countries now joined together to try and stop him.

**A. THE PROBLEM (v.7-8)**

In the North - Samaria

South - Arabia

East - Amon

West - Ash

And they all tried to fight against Nehemiah.

**B. THE RESPONSE**

- a) **Prayer: “We prayed to our God.”**
- b) **He posted a guard**  
He put guards on the wall. What a man. What a leader?

**3. OPPOSITION BY DISCOURAGEMENT (v.10-23)**

**A. THE PROBLEM (v.10-14)**

There were four problems causing discouragement:

- a) **Loss of strength (v.10)**  
**“The strength of the labourers is giving out.”**
  - Whenever you counsel someone who is depressed (discouraged) tell them to take a weekend leave and go and sleep, rest and eat (TAKE A BREAK).
- b) **Loss of vision (v.10)**  
**“There is too much rubble.”**
- c) **Loss of confidence (v.10)**  
**“We can’t.”**
- d) **Loss of security (v.11-12)**  
The people were becoming discouraged.

**B. THE RESPONSE (v.13-23)**

Here we learn how Nehemiah the leader coped with discouragement.

- a) **The workers were armed and placed strategically. (v.13)**
- b) **He encouraged them to trust God for protection. (v.14)**
- c) **He assigned his personal servants to help. (v.16)**
- d) **The builders and burden-bearers carried weapons. (v.17-18)**
- e) **A dawn system was established. (v.18b-20)**
- f) **Night time security was strengthened. (v.22)**
- g) **Nehemiah exercised constant vigilance. (v.23)**  
He went and he looked how they were doing.
  - Last to bed, first to get up.

**CONCLUSION**

Nehemiah is a brilliant example. He never gave up when the opposition was tough.



**STUDIES IN NEHEMIAH**  
**STUDY 5**

**OUTLINE**

**COPING WITH THE FIFTH COLUMN**  
(Nehemiah 5)

**INTRODUCTION**

1. **THE COMPLAINT OF THE POOR** (v.1-5)
  - A. LABOURERS
  - B. MORTGAGING OF THEIR PROPERTIES
2. **THE CONDEMNATION OF THE NOBLES** (v.6-13)
  - A. THINKS THE MATTER THROUGH (v.7a)
  - B. CONFRONTS THE NOBLES (v.7b-8)
  - C. CHARGES THEM WITH MORAL WRONG DOING (v.9)
  - D. ADMITS THEIR OWN MISTAKES
    - a) **Determined to stop it** (v.10)
    - b) **As quickly as possible** (v.11)
    - c) **A promise before God** (v.12)
3. **THE CONDUCT OF NEHEMIAH** (v.14-19)
  - A. HE WAS GENEROUS
  - B. HE SERVED

**CONCLUSION**

**NEHEMIAH**  
**STUDY 5**

**COPING WITH THE FIFTH COLUMN**  
**(Chapter 5)**

**INTRODUCTION**

In **Chapter 4** we saw Nehemiah coping with opposition from outside, but now in **Chapter 5**, opposition is from the inside. This was maybe harder.

**1. THE COMPLAINT OF THE POOR (v.1-5)**

**A. THE LABOURERS (v.1-2)**

Those working on the walls came to Nehemiah and said, “We get no food, our children haven’t enough to eat because we are working on the wall all day.”

**B. THINGS WERE SO BAD THAT THEY HAD TO MORTGAGE THEIR HOUSES**

To just survive they had to sell their homes, and furthermore they were charged excessive tax. So the labourers came to Nehemiah with valid concerns.

**2. THE CONDEMNATION OF THE NOBLES (v.6-13)**

**v.6 says “I was very angry.”**

**A. HE THINKS THE MATTER THROUGH CAREFULLY (v.7a)**

Although he was angry he did not respond immediately. He was a wise man. Cool down, cool down.

**B. THEN HE CONFRONTED THE NOBLES (v.7b)**

The wealthy people were at fault, and he was not afraid to confront them.

**C. HE CHARGED THEM WITH WRONGDOING (Morally) (v.9)**

**D. HE ADMITS HIS OWN MISTAKES**

**a) He was determined to stop the problem (v.10)**

**b) As quickly as possible (v.11)**

**c) Made a promise before God (v.12)**

**d) The serious nature of the vow (v.13)**

He shook the front of his robe, and he said that God would judge anybody who did not obey.

**3. THE CONDUCT OF NEHEMIAH (v.14-19)**

**A. HE WAS GENEROUS**

Nehemiah’s example was amazing. He never took food that was due to him as the governor. Everyday he would kill an ox, 6 sheep and chickens, and provide for those who would come to see him. He was unbelievably generous.

**B.     HE SERVED THE PEOPLE**

He never was their boss, but was their servant.

**CONCLUSION**

The opposition was fierce, but by his example, his prayer, his generosity and sheer hard work the work continued to the glory of God.

**Amen.**

## **NEHEMIAH**

### **SECTION 2** **STUDY 6**

#### **EXILES WHO RETURNED WITH ZERUBBABEL**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The Book of Nehemiah is a great encouragement to us. We saw the compassion of Nehemiah as he goes back to Jerusalem and in spite of great opposition he rebuilt the walls in only 52 days. It was an unbelievable feat, and now in the Second Section of Nehemiah, he will move away from the rebuilding of the walls, and focus on the rebuilding of the people.

**Chapter 7** is a chapter that is neglected by many commentaries. They often leave it out because it just contains a list of names of those who returned from exile. But two things happened in **Chapter 7**.

#### **1. EXILES WHO RETURNED WITH ZERUBBABEL**

##### **A. THE SAFE-GUARDING OF THE CITY (v.1-3)**

In his brilliant leadership Nehemiah puts in place security measures to guard the walls.

- He puts officers in place. (v.2)
- He closes the gates while it was still light. (v.3)

##### **B. HE SURVEYED THE PEOPLE (v.4-73)**

He closes off the chapter by giving us an account of the giving.

**NEHEMIAH**  
**STUDY 7**

**EZRA READS THE LAW**  
(Chapter 8:1-18)

This is one of the most glorious days in the history of Israel, when they experienced revival at the Water Gate.

The people had gathered together as EZRA began to read the Scriptures. There were men, woman and children. The service lasted for six hours and as they gathered together to listen to God's Word there were six wonderful characteristics of this revival:

**1. A REVERENCE FOR THE BIBLE (v.5)**

**“As he opened it the people all stood up.”**

As Ezra reads the Word of God, the people stood up.

**2. WORSHIP OF GOD (v.6)**

**All the people lifted up their hands and responded, “Amen, Amen.”**

They bowed down and worshipped the Lord.

**v.8 tells us that during the worship, “They instructed the people in the land. While the people were standing there, they read from the book of the Law of God, making it clear, and giving the meaning, so that the people could understand what was read.”**

**3. UNDERSTANDING OF THE BIBLE (v.7-8)**

The Word of God was not just read, it was explained so that the people had a clear understanding.

**4 REMORSE FOR SIN (v.9)**

**“All the people had been weeping as they listened to the Words of the Law.”**

**5. REJOICING IN GOD'S FELLOWSHIP (v.10-12)**

Confession of sin must then lead to the joy of forgiveness.

So Nehemiah says, **“Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.”**

This reminds us that true joy is based on knowledge of and submission to the Word of God.

**6. OBEDIENCE (v.13-18)**

They responded to God's Word and put into practice what they had heard.

The Chapter closes in **v.18; “Day after day from the first day to the last Ezra read from the book of the Law of God.”**

- **Nehemiah did everything right. Chapter 1 to 7 he rebuilds the walls, but he knew that was not enough. In Chapter 8 he brings them back to the Word of God. It is the people that are important, and their walk with God.**

**NEHEMIAH**  
**STUDY 8**

**THE RENEWAL OF THE COVENANT**  
(Chapter 9:1-10:39)

**INTRODUCTION**

**Chapter 9** must be one of the most all inspiring chapters in the Bible.

He gives us a picture of a nation at prayer.

**Chapter 8** describes a picture of a nation returning to the Bible.

**1. CONFESSION OF SIN (9:1-38)**

**v.1** tells us that all the Israelites gathered together for prayer and fasting. It was a time of confession, they confessed their sin – of marrying the Canaanites and at the same time they read from the Word of God.

From **verses 4:31** we then listen to the prayer. There were five sections to the prayer:

- A. THE CALL OF ABRAHAM (v.7-8)**
- B. THE DELIVERANCE FROM EGYPT (v.9-11)**
- C. THE PROVISION IN THE WILDERNESS (v.12-21)**
- D. THE CONQUEST ON CANAAN (v.22-25)**
- E. THEIR FAILURE UNDER THE JUDGES (v.26-31)**

The prayer then closes, asking for God's mercy.

This prayer would have reminded the people of all that God had done over the centuries. It also reminded them of the need to conform to the Word of God.

**Chapters 8 and 9** from the highlights of Nehemiah's work.

**NEHEMIAH**  
**STUDY 9**

**ASSENT TO THE COVENANT**  
(Chapter 10:1-39 Chapters 11-12)

**INTRODUCTION**

**Chapter 10** in one sense is the climax to the revival in **chapters 8 and 9**.

In **Chapter 8** it was based on the Bible.

In **Chapter 9** it involved prayer and confession.

Now in **Chapter 10** it involves obedience.

They now draw up a Covenant which would bind them to the Lord.

In **Verses 1-27** there is a list of names of those who signed the Covenant. Then in **Verses 28-32** we have a record of what they promised to do. The features of the Covenant are uncovered.

**1. ASSENT TO THE COVENANT**

**A. TOTAL SUBJECTION TO THE WORD OF GOD (v.29)**

**B. SEPERATION OF MIXED MARRIAGES (v.30)**

**C. OBSERVATION AND THE KEEPING HOLY OF THE SABBATH (v.31)**

**D. THE SUPPORTING OF THE TEMPLE (v.32)**

Under Nehemiah they promised those four things – and Nehemiah said that they had to sign and put it down in writing.

**2. THE PEOPLE INVOLVED (ch.11:1-12:26)**

Nehemiah was amazing.

In Chapters 1 – 6, he completed the rebuilding of the walls.

In Chapters 7 – 10, he had rebuilt the people and led them in a revival ending on a great note where they all came and signed the Covenant.

In Chapters 11 and 12 he will put the final things in place, which would guarantee the defense of Jerusalem and restore its status as the Capital.

**3. THE RESIDENTS IN JERUSALEM (11:1-24)**

Here, we are given a list of names of the Rulers (**v.3-9**), the Priests (**v.10-14**), the Levites (**v.15-18**), and the Officials (**v.19-24**). We also have a list of those who lived outside Jerusalem.

**4. LIST OF VILLAGES (11:25-36)**

**5. LIST OF THE PRIESTS (12:1-26)**

**CONCLUSION**

Nehemiah's work is now almost finished. He has completed what God had called him to do. The wall has been rebuilt and the people have been spiritually renewed. All that now remains is for Nehemiah to dedicate his work to God.

**NEHEMIAH**  
**STUDY 10**

**DEDICATION OF THE WALLS AND ADMINISTRATION**

(Chapter 12:27-13:31)

**1. DEDICATION OF THE WALLS**

The Lord has wonderfully undertaken for Nehemiah.

The wall has been restored, the gates that were burned have been replaced and under the dynamic leadership of Nehemiah the people have been restored to God. There was revival (**Ch. 8 & 9**), and finally the day of dedication has now arrived at last. Four things happened:

**A. THE ASSEMBLY OF THE LEVITES AND THE MUSICIANS (v.27-29)**

Music played a very important part.

**B. THERE WAS PURIFICATION (v.30)**

The Priests and the Levites went through the Purification Ceremony.

**C. THE PROCESSION (v.31-39)**

They divided up into two groups:

- a) Under Ezra**
- b) Under Nehemiah**

Each group had a choir (7 Priests and 8 Levites), and they walked around the wall. One in a clockwise direction and the other anti-clockwise.

**D. THE DEDICATION CEREMONY (v. 40-43)**

On the day they offered great sacrifices rejoicing because God had given them great joy.

**2. THE ORGANIZATION OF THE LEVITES (Ch.12:44-47)**

The walls were now dedicated and Nehemiah now takes steps to make sure that those who worked in the Temple were looked after; the Priests, Levites, singers and porters.

Appreciation for faithful service motivated the people to contribute to the support of the Temple workers.



### 3. NEHEMIAH'S FURTHER REFORMS (Ch.13)

After Nehemiah had completed his work, and dedicated the walls he went back to Persia and very sadly he later learned that all the work he had done had collapsed (the people). So he goes back to Jerusalem and carries out further reforms.

There were five. What is important is that he again begins by bringing the people back to the Bible (v.1). It is now 12 years later.

#### A. BANISH THE FOREIGNERS (v.1-3)

In **Deut. 23:3-5**, it laid down that the Ammonites and Moabites were not allowed to be part of the congregation. But when Nehemiah was away they allowed them to come in and now Nehemiah banishes them.

#### B. THERE WAS COMPROMISING FRIENDSHIP (v.4-9)

The Priests had allowed Tobiah to use one of the rooms in the Temple (Tobiah was the enemy). Even worse he was given a room that used to store the tithing. When Nehemiah heard of this he says; **"I threw out all of Tobiahs' goods from the room."** Then he purified the room.

#### C. FINANCIAL DISASTER (v.10-14)

He discovers that the people stopped tithing and again Nehemiah tackles the issue and tithing was brought back in.

#### D. A SECULAR SUBBATH DAY (v.15-22)

Now he learns of a fifth problem. Some of the men of Judah were marrying women from Moab and Ammon and they stopped speaking their own language and spoke the foreign language (v.24).

In v.25 Nehemiah reacted; **"I rebuked them, I called curses on them. I beat some of the men and pulled out their hair."**

This may sound radical, but it is an indication of how he was gripped by sin and wanting to put it right.

### CONCLUSION

Nehemiah hated mediocrity. For him God comes first and he brought the people back to the Bible.