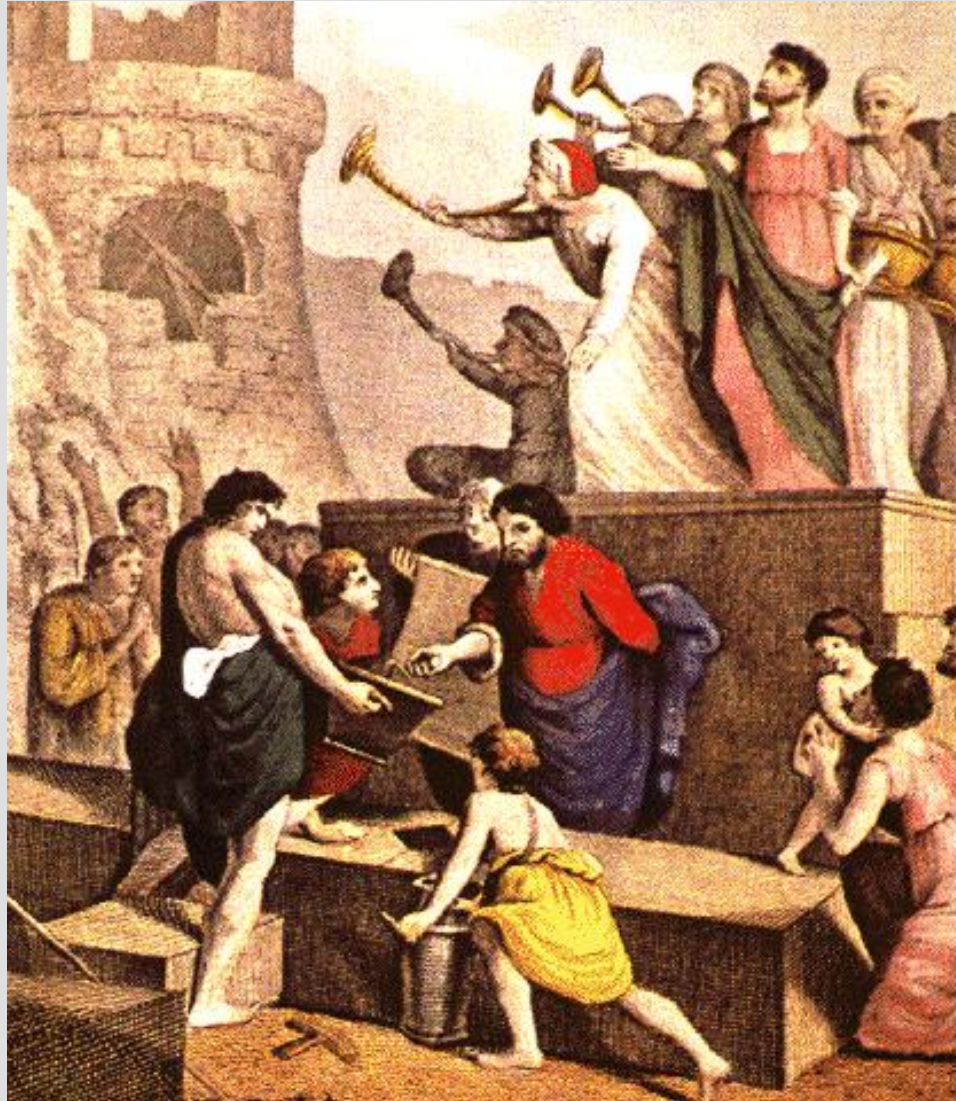


A PRAYER AND A PLAN

with the God of Heaven you can!



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An Inductive Bible Study Guide

Nehemiah

Author: Angela Kugia Sanchez

A Prayer and A Plan

With the God of Heaven You Can!

by Angela Kugia Sanchez

A *PRAYER AND A PLAN* is a Bible study guide that will take you verse-by-verse through the book of Nehemiah to learn directly from God. In this study you will learn powerful lessons from the life, attitude, and actions of Nehemiah. Get ready to encounter daunting situations, heartfelt prayers, unrelenting enemies, awe-inspiring actions, and astounding victories. It is my fervent prayer that as you allow the Holy Spirit to guide you into all truth, the life-changing, living Word of God will penetrate your heart, mind, and soul. As a result, just like Nehemiah, no matter what circumstances or enemies come your way you will be filled with great joy and rejoicing that will be seen and heard from afar, to the glory of your great and awesome God!!

“We need to come to the Bible in the spirit of learners desiring to be taught... Suppose that God were now to speak to us in any other form of revelation. Suppose that we heard Him speaking audibly from the mountains, or saw His words in flame on the sky. Should we not listen in awe-struck silence? Should we venture to correct the voices, or revise the records? Should we dare to do any other than reverently to ask, “What is this which God is saying to us?” ... this Bible comes to us with just such authority. Some portions of it have come to us literally from quaking mountains and flaming skies. The heavens have been opened, and angels of God have come down; the earth has been shaken, and men have stood in fear of their lives, to make God’s thoughts clear to us.” (Hints on Bible Study, by John Wattles & Co. 1897)

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“An astronomer was once exploring, on a clear night, the surface of the moon. His telescope, as he thought, was in perfect order. A new lens had recently been inserted in the tube. With his splendid lens he hoped to make discoveries not seen by any astronomer before him. He was not at first disappointed. He distinctly saw living inhabitants in the moon. He rubbed his eyes with astonishment, and again gazed, and gazed again, with trembling rapture. He certainly saw moving creatures walking with gigantic strides over the valleys and mountains. At last the mystery was solved. One side of his new lens had not been cleansed. Upon it were a few infinitesimal insects, which, magnified, looked like strange animals, unlike any known to earth. When the lens was rubbed clean, the strange animals vanished.

The principle holds good in the study of the Word of God. Grave errors are foisted into the sacred pages, and hidden truths remain hidden, for the want of undistorted vision in the looker-on.” (Hints on Bible Study, by John Wattles & Co. 1897)

Nehemiah - Introduction

A PRAYER AND A PLAN is a Bible Study guide that uses a personal study method called Inductive Bible Study. By following the simple steps and using the questions as a guide you will spend your time learning God's Word directly from Him with the help of the Holy Spirit. As you grapple with the living Word, trust God to open your eyes to His life-changing truths. You will be amazed by how much you learn and how those truths that are born in your heart and mind through your own careful study will impact your life in such deep powerful ways.

Always remember to complete your own study before you consult any commentaries or outside sources. Don't spoil the joy and excitement that awaits you as you discover on your own.

The focus of this study is on the book of Nehemiah, but you will also have wonderful opportunities to explore other Scriptures (cross-references) that will support, expand upon, and help explain what is written in Nehemiah

To begin your study of Nehemiah, turn to the Appendix and **take out the Nehemiah study worksheets**, which are the text of Nehemiah typed out and double-spaced. This will make it easy for you to underline, circle, and write on as you study. You can use your own Bible to look up cross-reference verses. (The worksheets provided in this study are the NASB version. – If you prefer you can use your own Bible for the study.)

For each lesson, simply read the instructions one by one and do what they say. You will find the questions to be very factual and the answers easy to find right from the text. Just follow the questions step by step and you will unearth the rich depths of God's powerful Word as you go. The highlighted *Go Deeper* sections are **optional** – but well worth your effort and time; so try it-you'll like it. ☺

And please don't allow yourself to get discouraged; you don't have to "get it all" right away. Just do the best you can. Set your timer for 15-20 minutes each day, pray, think, and study hard. Then praise God for all He has shown you!! (If you get behind pick up where you should be – you can always go back and do the rest later.)

Remember, Satan, the enemy of your soul, will try to discourage you, persuade you that it is too hard, or convince you that other things are more important. Don't let him! Fix your eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of your faith. He will help you by the power of His Spirit for the glory of His Name. (Hebrews 12:2-3)

And don't forget to really enjoy spending time at your Lord's feet and listening to Him through His Word. Oh beloved child of the King, He has so much to say to you, and to do in you. Listen intently, hear willingly, and obey quickly. Now GET EXCITED!! – The Lord has great things in store for you, and you will never be the same!

What should you do when the news is bad, the situation seems hopeless, and your enemies despise and mock you?

Well, take heart dear child of God, because Nehemiah found himself in that exact situation and we have so much to learn from him in the weeks ahead.

*"Make me know your ways, O Lord;
Teach me your paths.
Lead me in Your truth and teach me,
For You are the God of my salvation;
For You I wait all the day."*

Psalm 25:4-5

Nehemiah – Historical Background

OPTIONAL GO DEEPER: Look up the following verses to gain a general overview of the historical background to the times and events of Nehemiah. Briefly note the main character and/or main events of each passage:

Genesis 12:1-3

Genesis 15:13

Genesis 17:5-8

Genesis 26:3-4 (check verse 1 to see who He is talking to)

Genesis 28:13-14 (check verse 10 to see who He is talking to)

Genesis 35:10

Genesis 35:23-26

Genesis 45:4-11

Exodus 1:1-13

Exodus 6:2-8

Exodus 12:40-42

Deuteronomy 28:1-6

Deuteronomy 28:15-20, 49-50

Jeremiah 25:4-9

2 Kings 25:8-12

Jeremiah 29:10

Isaiah 44:28-45:1

Ezra 1:1-2:2

Ezra 6:15

Think about it: After much conflict the temple in Jerusalem had finally been rebuilt, but what about the city itself? Keep it all in mind as you begin your study.

NEHEMIAH - CHAPTER ONE

I beseech You, O Lord

Always begin your study times with prayer. Each day ask God to give you understanding and insight as you study His Word. Read Psalm 119:18 and make this verse your prayer.

The book of Nehemiah is a historical narrative—a record of real events that took place in the history of Israel.

1. Begin your study by reading through Nehemiah chapters one and two at a fairly quick pace to get a general idea of what this book is all about.
2. Read through **chapter one** again carefully to comprehend the details. As you read look for:
 - each reference to God along with the pronouns “*You*” and “*Your*” that refer to Him. Circle or underline each one in a distinct color.
 - references to time (*days, months, years, now, then, until, when etc.*) Underline each one then draw a clock symbol in the margin. This will make it easier to evaluate when each event takes place, and to see how much time passes between events.

OPTIONAL GO DEEPER: Read through chapter one again. Watch for repeated words or phrases, lists, conditions, etc. Pay attention to contrasts and comparisons, as well as terms of conclusion or relationship (i.e. therefore, so that, because, but).

You may find it helpful to underline, circle, color, or use symbols to distinguish what you find in some way in the text. The purpose of “marking” the text in these ways is to help you remember what you have read and to enable you to easily go back and evaluate what you have seen.

Now Answer the following questions from chapter one using words right from the text as much as possible:

Chapter One Verse 1

3. Whose words are these and where was he?
4. When did the events in this chapter take place?
5. Look up a calendar of Jewish months to gain a better understanding of when these events took place. It would be helpful to note how the Jewish calendar relates to our modern calendar.

Chapter One Verses 2-4

6. Who came?

7. What two things did Nehemiah ask about and what answer did he receive?

8. According to verse 4, when he heard the answer what are the first three things he did?

Think about it: Does this seem like a normal response to news like this?

9. Look back at the rest of verse 4 and write out what else he does:

We saw that Nehemiah had received some very disheartening and discouraging news that caused him to weep and mourn. But he did not give up and he did not give in. Instead, what did he do with his mourning?

Chapter One Verses 5-11

10. What one word would describe what Nehemiah did according to these verses? (*Look in verses 4, 6 & 11 for a repeated word.*) Highlight or put brackets in the margin to set verses 5-11 apart.

11. For how long and how often did Nehemiah do this? (Check verses 4 and 6.)

Think about it: What does this tell you about his concern?

Next, spend some time carefully evaluating what Nehemiah said:

12. Look carefully at verse 5 to see how he begins his prayer. List out all you learn about God in this verse:

13. What does Nehemiah do next? Look carefully at the Nehemiah 1:6-7 and note what He asks of God and what He is doing:

14. What does Nehemiah do in verses 1:8-9?

*OPTIONAL GO DEEPER: Read the following passages to see what Nehemiah is referring to:
Deuteronomy 4:1-28; Deuteronomy 30:2-4; Deuteronomy 12:1-6; 2 Chronicles 6:34-7:14.*

15. Read Nehemiah 1:10 paying special attention to all the references to God. List out the 5 points that Nehemiah makes:

Think about it: Consider what Nehemiah said in verses 8-10. Why are the people in their current situation? What important point is he making in his plea?

Finally, notice how Nehemiah ends his prayer:

16. Reread verse 11 and then read verse 6 again. How does he refer to himself and the children of Israel in these verses?

*OPTIONAL GO DEEPER:
What is important to God? Read Leviticus 22:31-33 and Deuteronomy 28:58-59:*

What does the Lord delight in? Read Jeremiah 9:24 to find out:

17. What two requests does Nehemiah make for himself at the end of his prayer?

18. Who is “*this man*” in Nehemiah 1:11 referring to?

19. What was Nehemiah’s position?

OPTIONAL GO DEEPER: Review all you learned about Nehemiah’s prayer. See if you can discover a pattern or some guidelines for prayer that you can follow. Write out your insights:

Use the following application questions as catalyst to allow God to speak to your heart. Add your own application questions as the Spirit leads you.

APPLY IT – Chapter One

What about you? How do you respond to difficult news, or when the situation you are facing seems hopeless and overwhelming? It is normal to weep and mourn, but do you stop there? It is easy to give in to your emotions and fall into discouragement, depression, or despair. It is tempting to give up in face of your circumstances and allow yourself to be ineffectual for kingdom work. What do you choose to do? Do you turn to God with prayer and pour your heart out in worship, confession, and petition regarding your situation? How often and how much do you pray over your difficult situations? Once in a while or regularly and consistently?

Do you know God well enough to be able to focus on His attributes and character in your time of need? Do you know God’s Word and His promises so that you are able to cling to them and hold fast in hope and expectation when you pray? What do you do with your fears? Don’t let them stop you from speaking up or taking action. Choose to pray through them and say what God has for you to say and do what He has for you to do. Are you able to help others focus on God and the truth about Him when they are facing difficult times?

NEHEMIAH - CHAPTER TWO

the good hand of my God was on me

Before you begin, take a few minutes to review all you have learned, then spend a few minutes in prayer asking the Lord to give you wisdom, insight, and understanding as you study His Word.

1. Read through chapter two at a fairly quick pace to get the general idea of what it is about.
2. Now read through chapter two slowly and carefully to comprehend the details. As you read watch for references to time (*days, months, years, now, then, until, when etc.*) Underline each one then draw a clock symbol in the margin the same way you did in chapter one.
3. Who are the main characters in this chapter?
4. When do the events of this chapter begin? (Verse 2:1) Use a calendar of Jewish months to see how much time has passed since the events of chapter one.

OPTIONAL GO DEEPER: Read through chapter two again. As you read look for repeated words and phrases. Pay attention to contrasts and comparisons, questions and answers, lists of exhortations or instructions. Watch for terms of conclusion or relationship (For/Therefore Because/But/For this reason /Also/In order that etc.) You may find it helpful to underline, circle or highlight the different words/phrases in distinguishing ways as you study so it easy to go back and see what you found later.

Now answer the following questions from chapter two using words right from the text as much as possible:

Chapter Two Verses 1-4

5. According to verse 2, what did the king notice about Nehemiah?

OPTIONAL GO DEEPER: Using Hebrew word study tools look up the word “face” (verse 2) and record any important insights.

6. What was Nehemiah’s reaction to the king’s comment?

Think about it: Why would he feel this way? Think about all that has happened, what he had asked for in his prayer, and what he is about to do. Is there any danger in feeling this way?

7. Once again Nehemiah was faced with a difficult and emotional situation. What did he do according to Nehemiah 2:4?

OPTIONAL GO DEEPER: What truth about God did Nehemiah mention in verse 4 as well as in chapter one verse 5? Why was this an important truth to know, and for him to remember in those situations?

8. Highlight or put brackets in the margin by the prayer in verse 2:4 just like you did for the prayer in chapter one. **Use this same marking to set apart all the prayers** you come across in Nehemiah as you study so that you will be able to go back and find them easily

Chapter Two Verses 5-11

9. Briefly summarize what Nehemiah asked for. What was the result?

Think about it: Considering what you learned about Nehemiah in verse 2, what do you notice about his requests?

10. How does Nehemiah account for the king's response to his requests?

Chapter Two Verses 12-18

11. According to verses 12-16, what did Nehemiah do shortly after he arrived?

OPTIONAL GO DEEPER: Look up a picture of Jerusalem's walls in Nehemiah's days and trace the route he took.

12. Carefully evaluate verses 2:17-18 to see how Nehemiah handled this situation and how it affected the people. See if you can discover a pattern to follow. Write out your insights below:

Chapter Two Verses 19-20

13. Was everybody happy about what Nehemiah was doing? Read verses 10 and 19 then list out the words from the text that describe the attitudes and actions of these people:

14. How did Nehemiah handle his enemies? Carefully read verse 20 again and note the three parts to his answer. (Pay attention to the two groups of people he contrasts and what he says about each one.)

Think about it: How does Nehemiah refer to God? When has he done that before and why does he focus on that specific truth about God in this situation

Use the following application questions as catalyst to allow God to speak to your heart. Add your own application questions as the Spirit leads you.

APPLY IT – Chapter 2

What do you do when your Godly actions bring scorn and ridicule? Are you tempted to give up and abandon your task or to compromise to make peace? How will you keep your focus to press on? Are you willing and able to lead others to follow the Lord in the midst of a bad situation or the taunts of an enemy? Are you willing to speak up, encourage, and inspire others by your example?

NEHEMIAH - CHAPTER THREE

next to him

The Lord is busy building His kingdom and there is work to be done. But often the job seems overwhelming. Find out what difference one man or woman can make as you study chapter 3 of Nehemiah.

Prepare to meet with the Lord by reading and praying Psalm 119:34. Begin your study times with prayer and don't forget to stop and pray while you study. The Lord wants to give you understanding and insight.

1. Read through Nehemiah chapter three at a fairly quick pace to get a general idea of what this chapter is all about.
2. What is the main event of this chapter?
3. Read through chapter three again to carefully comprehend the details. As you read, watch for and underline or circle the phrases "*next to him*," "*next to them*," or "*after him*."
4. How many times were these phrases used?

Think about it: What does this tell you about how the work was divided among the people? How many sections were being worked on?

OPTIONAL GO DEEPER: Spend some time on careful observations as you read through chapter three. Look for other repeated words or phrases, contrasts and/or comparisons, names of Gates, Towers, and other geographical references, etc.

5. Read through chapter three one more time and as you read make a list in the margin of the occupations of the workers when you see them. (i.e. priest, official, etc.)
6. How many carpenters and stonemasons were there?

7. Reread Chapter 3 verses 11, 20, 21, 24, 27 and 30 to find a phrase repeated in all of them. Write it out below:

8. Did everyone do the same amount of work? (Look carefully at the names in verses 3:4&21, 3:5&27, and 3:8&30)

Think about it: Did any one person have the responsibility to build the whole wall? How much was each person responsible for? What did they need to do regarding the other sections?

Use the following application questions as catalyst to allow God to speak to your heart. Add your own application questions as the Spirit leads you.

APPLY IT – Chapter Three

What about you? The world is a very big place, and the Lord is busy building His Kingdom. What “section” have you been assigned to in this life? Your home, your church, your workplace, your neighborhood, your community, your commute, etc. – all places and opportunities the Lord has placed you in to speak His truths, be His example, demonstrate His love, and disciple others. Are you using the talents, abilities, and spiritual gifts He has given you for eternal things? Do you find yourself too busy “building” your temporary life and leaving your “section” unfinished? How are you using your time to serve the Lord and work for His purposes?

NEHEMIAH - CHAPTER FOUR

so we carried on the work

Enemies are trying to silence and dishearten you. What should you think and what should you do? Find out this week as you study Nehemiah chapter 4.

Before you begin, take a few minutes to review all you have learned, then spend a few minutes in prayer asking the Lord to give you wisdom, insight, and understanding as you study His Word.

1. Read through Nehemiah chapter four at a fairly quick pace to get a general idea of what this chapter is all about.
2. Read through chapter four again carefully to comprehend the details. As you read, underline or put a circle around each reference to God, and each reference to Nehemiah's enemies. (Be sure to mark the prayer sections the same way you did in chapter one.)

OPTIONAL GO DEEPER: Spend time on careful observations as you read through chapter four. Look for other repeated words/phrases, contrasts/comparisons, references to time (that day, when, then, etc.)

3. What were the names of Nehemiah's enemies? (Review what you learned about them previously in Nehemiah 2:10,19)

Now Answer the following questions from chapter four using words right from the text as much as possible:

Chapter Four Verses 1-6

4. What tactic did the enemy use?
5. How did Nehemiah and the people respond to the enemy's attack. What did they do first, and what did they do second? (Consider this in light of what you learned in Nehemiah 2:20)
6. What reason does verse 6 give for their actions?

Think about it: How did their first action affect their second?

Chapter Four Verses 7-15

7. What tactic did the enemy use next? Note how persistent they were.
8. What two steps of response did the people take according to verse 4:9?
9. What did Nehemiah do next according to verse 4:14? (Compare this verse with Nehemiah 1:5.)
What two things did he tell them to do instead of being afraid?

Think about it: Why did he tell them in that order? How do your thoughts and actions relate?

10. What affect did this have on the people?
11. Who did Nehemiah give credit to?

OPTIONAL GO DEEPER: Read through the following Scriptures and briefly note important truths about God to remember the next time your enemies come calling:

Isaiah 40:28-31

Isaiah 41:10

Psalms 27:1

Psalms 28:7

Psalms 70:5

Psalms 129:4

Psalms 145:3

Psalms 145:18

Psalms 59:16-17 (What will you do?)

Chapter Four Verses 16-23

12. Carefully read through Nehemiah 4:16-23. Picture the scene in your mind. List out the steps they took to deal with their enemies:

13. What important truth did Nehemiah remind them of (verse 20)?

14. How does that truth in verse 20 relate to what you saw in verse 14?

15. According to verses 4:21-23 when was an okay time to let down their guard?

Think about it: Does trusting God mean you don't have to do anything?

Use the following application questions as catalyst to allow God to speak to your heart. Add your own application questions as the Spirit leads you.

APPLY IT – Chapter Four

Are there enemies in your life that are hostile to the plans and purposes God has for you? Are they trying to silence and dishearten you, stop you, or persuade you to compromise? Are you in danger of being discouraged by their, taunts, sarcasm, or threats?

Are there any steps you need to take to deal with your enemies? Are you being wise and planning ahead? Are you in the habit of letting down your guard in certain situations or places? Are there any situations or places you should be avoiding or separating yourself from? Are you praying for wisdom to know when to respond and when to keep silent? Thank God for His provision, and ask Him to help you strengthen your resolve and make up your mind to trust Him and do what He calls you to do no matter what.

NEHEMIAH - CHAPTER FIVE

remember me, O my God

A looming disaster, an appalling injustice, and a great outcry face Nehemiah. Find out what he said, what he did, and what it all means for you.

Read Psalm 119:38 and pray it to the Lord as you prepare to hear from Him. Ask the Lord to give you discipline and determination to help you guard your time with Him.

1. Read through Nehemiah chapter five at fairly quick pace to get a general idea of what this chapter is all about.
2. Carefully read through chapter five again to comprehend the details. As you read watch for the words “*said*” and “*outcry*” and circle or underline them. (Mark the prayer sections the same way you did in chapter one.)

OPTIONAL GO DEEPER: Spend some time on careful observations as you read through chapter five. Look for other repeated words or phrases, contrasts and/or comparisons, and references to time

Now Answer the following questions from chapter five using words right from the text as much as possible:

Chapter Five Verses 1-13

3. According to verse 3 what is going on in the land at this time?
4. Who is causing the trouble now?

Think about it: How does this compare with the previous trouble? How is this more dangerous?

OPTIONAL GO DEEPER: Use your Hebrew word study tools to look up and learn more about the following words found in verses 6-7. Record what you learn:

contended

nobles

usury

5. Read through **Nehemiah 5:1-13** again to see how Nehemiah reacted to the outcry of his people and how he dealt with the problem. Carefully evaluate each of the verses listed below and briefly summarize what he did:

Verse 6

Verse 7

Verses 8-9

Verses 10-11

Think about it: How should the godly respond to injustice? Is it easy to take on the status quo? See if you can discern a pattern for handling a situation such as this from Nehemiah's example

OPTIONAL GO DEEPER:

Read Leviticus 25:35-39, 47-49 and Deuteronomy 23:20 to gain additional insights into the situation. Summarize what you learn:

6. How did the people respond in verses 5:12-13? Note what they said and what they did:

Think about it: What was the real heart of the issue? Who was really doing the rebuking?

Chapter Five Verses 14-19

7. Read **Nehemiah 5:14-19** and underline or circle every use of the words “not” and “neither/nor.”
8. How long was Nehemiah governor?
9. What did he not do, and what was his motivation and focus?
10. What was his prayer and how did it relate to his motive?

Think about it: Why is he writing about this? Compare this passage with verse 9. What if nobody notices all you do for them?

OPTIONAL GO DEEPER:

Read the following passages and note what you learn about the fear of the Lord:

Psalms 111:10

Proverbs 8:13

Proverbs 14:26-27

Proverbs 16:6

Luke 12:4-5

1 Peter 1:13-19

Use the following application questions as catalyst to allow God to speak to your heart. Add your own application questions as the Spirit leads you.

APPLY IT – Chapter Five

Are you willing to speak up about injustice? Are you able to lovingly, but boldly, speak the truth and confront sin? What do you do when confronted with your sin? Do you listen with humility and weigh the words that are spoken to you with love and wisdom? Are you willing to listen and prayerfully examine your heart and actions? Are you willing to repent and obey?

NEHEMIAH - CHAPTER SIX

But now, O God, strengthen my hands

What will Nehemiah do when an unrelenting enemy and discouragement come knocking? Find out as you study chapter 6.

Before you begin, spend a few minutes in prayer asking the Lord to give you wisdom, insight, and understanding as you study His Word.

1. Read through Nehemiah chapter six at a fairly quick pace to get a general idea of what this chapter is all about.
2. Carefully read through chapter six again to comprehend the details. As you read, watch for and circle or underline any references to Nehemiah's enemies including their corresponding pronouns "they" and "them". Look for references to time mark them in the same way you have previously. (Mark the prayer sections the same way you did in chapter one.)

OPTIONAL GO DEEPER: Spend some time on careful observations as you read through chapter six. Look for other repeated words or phrases, contrasts and/or comparisons, terms of conclusion, etc.

3. What important information do you learn in verse one about the wall?
4. What was the enemy's goal in this chapter (see verses 9, 13, 14, 19)?
5. Read verses 2-9 one more time paying special attention to what was being sent, to whom, by who, how often, when, where and why. You may find it helpful to highlight the word "sent" as you read.
6. See if you can discern the enemy's game plan as the events unfold. Note what strategy was used in each of the following passages:

6:2-3

6:4

6:5-7

Think about it: Was the enemy easily dissuaded? Did they have an effective plan? Does it still work today?

7. Read verses 6:2-9 again. How did Nehemiah handle it all? Note Nehemiah's response in each of the following passages:

6:3

6:4

6:8

6:9

8. What did the enemy have up their sleeves next? Read 6:10-13 then summarize their strategy and note their ultimate goal according to verse 13:

9. What did Nehemiah do this time? (verse 14)

Think about it: How did Nehemiah's earlier prayers help him now? What is the danger of fear?

OPTIONAL GO DEEPER:

Considering Nehemiah's prayer in verse 14, read the following passages and note what you learn:

Psalms 7:8-11

Psalms 9:7-10

Psalms 94:17-23

10. Read **Nehemiah 6:15-19** again. What has been accomplished? When does it happen? How long did it take? Consult a chart of Jewish months to see how much time has passed since the events of chapters one and two.

11. What effect did it have on their enemies? Why?

12. What do you learn about Tobiah and the people?

Think about it: How would what they said (verse 19) affect Nehemiah?

Use the following application questions as catalyst to allow God to speak to your heart. Add your own application questions as the Spirit leads you.

APPLY IT – Chapter Six

Are you able to recognize the strategy of the enemy? How will you respond to those who try to distract you, lie about you, or deceive you, in order to hinder your work for the Lord? What will you do when discouragement comes knocking? How will you prepare so as not to be caught off guard?

NEHEMIAH - CHAPTER SEVEN

When the wall was rebuilt

When God shows up powerfully and “mission impossible” has been accomplished what will you do about your enemy? Find out what the children of Israel did as you study chapter 7.

Prepare to study by reading Psalm 119:68 and turning into a prayer. Remember to pray each day as you study and ask the Lord to open His Word to you.

1. Read through Nehemiah chapter seven at a fairly quick pace to get a general idea of what this chapter is all about.
2. Carefully read through chapter seven again to comprehend the details. Look for references to time and mark them as you did previously. Also underline any categories or groups of people (priests, singers, gatekeepers, etc.)

OPTIONAL GO DEEPER: Spend some time on careful observations as you read through chapter seven. Look for other repeated words or phrases, contrasts and/or comparisons, terms of conclusion, etc.

3. Summarize the main events covered in verses 1-4:

Think about it: If the work was complete why did they do this? What does it say about the enemy?

4. What criteria were used to appoint the commander? (verse 2)
5. Summarize the main event covered in verses 5-65:
6. Why did Nehemiah do what he did (verse 5)?

You saw the various groups or categories of people that returned to Jerusalem. It will be helpful to learn a little more about some of these groups.

7. Who were the Levites and how did Aaron fit in? Read Exodus 1:1-2; Exodus 6:16-20:
8. Who were the priests and how did they relate to the Levites? Read Exodus 28:1, 41:

9. How did the Levites and priests work together? See Numbers 18:1-7:
10. Who were the singers, who appointed them, and why were they singing? See 1 Chronicles 15:16; 16:7-9; 25:1-3

OPTIONAL GO DEEPER:

Look up the following verses and write out the reasons we should sing praises to the Lord:

Psalm 13:6

Psalm 21:3

Psalm 33:3-4

Psalm 47:7-8

Psalm 59:16

Psalm 63:7

Psalm 71:23

Psalm 92:4

Psalm 96:1-2

Psalm 98:1

Psalm 101:1

Psalm 104:33 How long will you sing?

11. Review **Nehemiah 7:61-65**. What was the problem and what solution was given?
12. Summarize the main events covered in verses 7:66-73:

Use the following application questions as catalyst to allow God to speak to your heart. Add your own application questions as the Spirit leads you.

APPLY IT – Chapter Seven

When a faithful man or woman who fears God more than many is needed for a task will you be chosen? Are you able to discern when God puts something in your heart to do? Do you regularly sit still and “know that He is God” so that you can grow in your ability to discern when he is guiding you?

NEHEMIAH - CHAPTER EIGHT

all the people were attentive to the book of the Law

***When the work had been completed what did the children of Israel long for?
Find out what you study chapter 8 in Nehemiah.***

Be sure to begin with prayer, asking the Lord to give you wisdom, insight, and understanding as you study His Word.

1. Before you begin your study of chapter eight, pause for a bit and just reflect on all that has taken place up to this point. Read through the following Scriptures in Nehemiah to help you remember.

Chapter 1:4, 11 Chapter 2:4-5, 20 Chapter 4:14 Chapter 6:9, 15-16 Chapter 7:1

Think about it: What were the human odds of all this happening?

2. Read through Nehemiah chapter eight to get a general idea of what this chapter is all about.
3. Carefully read through chapter eight again to comprehend the details. Look for references to time and draw a clock symbol or mark as previously. Also look for and underline or circle the word “people” along with its pronoun “they”.

OPTIONAL GO DEEPER: As in previous chapters, spend some time on careful observations as you read through chapter eight. Look for other repeated words or phrases, contrasts and/or comparisons, terms of conclusion, etc.

4. When did the events of this chapter take place? How many days went by during the events of this chapter? How much time has passed since the events in chapter seven?
5. Look at all the places “the people” are mentioned in chapter 8. Make a list below, briefly noting what they did or said. Be sure to include the verse reference and note on which day they said or did it. (We began the first one to get you started.)

The People:

Verse 1 – gathered at the square

6. To be sure you caught this- according to Nehemiah 8:1 what did the people ask for?
7. How long were they willing to listen (verse 3)?

Think about it: How did seeing God's powerful work accomplished through them affect the people's hearts, attitudes, and actions?

OPTIONAL GO DEEPER:

Read the following passages and note what you learn about "the law":

Deuteronomy 4:1-10

Deuteronomy 17:14, 18-20

8. Review **Nehemiah 8:7-12**. What was the goal for the reading of the law? What was the evidence that it had been accomplished?

Think about it: How did seeing God's powerful work accomplished through them prepare them for hearing and responding to His Word?

9. Review **Nehemiah 8:13-18**. On what day do these events begin and what attitude did they have?
10. According to verse 18 what did they do every day?

OPTIONAL GO DEEPER:

Look up the Feast of Booths to learn more about it, including what else it was called, what day of the month it began and how long it lasted. Review verses 13-18 and note how long it took the sons of Israel to prepare for this feast. Also read Leviticus 23:33-43 to learn more. Record your insights:

Use the following application questions as catalyst to allow God to speak to your heart. Add your own application questions as the Spirit leads you.

APPLY IT – Chapter Eight

Do you long to hear and understand God's Word? Are you attentive and eager? Do you weep over your sin and then celebrate with joy over the opportunity to be purified and obey Him? Do you desire to gain additional insight into all He shows you? How do you respond when you find out there is something you should be doing? Are you willing to proclaim His truths and exhort others to obey as well?

NEHEMIAH - CHAPTER NINE

now because of all this...

The nation had lost its way. Though God was faithful they had acted wickedly and were suffering the consequences of their sin. Find out what the children of Israel decided to do about it in chapters 9-11.

Be sure to begin your study times with prayer. Start by reading and praying Psalm 119:80.

1. Read through Nehemiah chapter nine at a fairly quick pace to get a general idea of what this chapter is all about.
2. Carefully read through chapter nine again to comprehend the details. Look for references to time and draw a clock symbol in the margin or mark them as you did before. Also look for the phrase “*You are*” and underline or highlight it in a distinct way.

OPTIONAL GO DEEPER: As before, spend some time on careful observations as you read through chapter nine. Look for other repeated words or phrases, contrasts and/or comparisons, terms of conclusion, etc.

3. Look at every place the phrase “***You are***” was used in chapter 9 and list out everything you learn about the Lord:

4. When did the events of this chapter begin? What month was it and how do you know?

5. What had the children of Israel just finished doing? (See chapter 8:17-18)
6. List the actions the people took in **Nehemiah 9:1**:

Think about it: What attitude was displayed by their actions?

OPTIONAL GO DEEPER: Use your Hebrew word study tools or Bible dictionary to look up the word “sackcloth” for additional insight.

7. List the actions the people took in **Nehemiah 9:2-3**, and be sure to note how much time they spent:
8. Who is doing what in chapter 9 verses 4-5?
9. In one word describe what is happening in Nehemiah chapter 9 verses 5-38:

Think about it: How does what they are doing in verses 5-38 relate to what the people did in verse three?

10. Look carefully at **Nehemiah 9:5-6** and note how they begin their prayer and what truth about God is being proclaimed.

Think about it: Why is it important to begin with this truth?

OPTIONAL GO DEEPER: Read all about it in Genesis chapter 1.

11. Look carefully at **Nehemiah 9:7-8** to see what event they are recounting. What do you learn about God and His promise?

OPTIONAL GO DEEPER: Read all about it in Genesis 11:31-12:3; 15:18-21; 17:1-7.

12. Look carefully at **Nehemiah 9:9-15** to see what events they are recounting. Underline every action verb that describes what God did (i.e. You performed; You divided; etc). What does this tell you about God?

OPTIONAL GO DEEPER: Read all about it in Exodus 3:7-8; 7:20-21; 8:5-6, 16-24; 9:3-10, 23-26; 10:13-15, 22-23; 12:12,29; 13:21-22; 14:21-30; 16:4; 17:6; 19:18-20; 20:1,8; 21:1; 24:3.

13. Look carefully at **Nehemiah 9:16-21** to see what events they are recounting. Circle the words “*but*,” “*listen*,” and “*they*”. In the chart below list out everything they did in one column and the contrasting truths about God in the second column:

They...	But You ...

OPTIONAL GO DEEPER: Read all about it in Exodus 32:2-4; 34:6-7; Deuteronomy 2:7; 8:2-4; and Numbers 14:1-4, 22-23, 29-34.

14. Now look carefully at **Nehemiah 9:22-25** to see what events they are recounting. Once again underline every action verb that describes what God did (i.e. You gave; You made; etc). What truth about God is being proclaimed? According to verse 25, how did it turn out for the people?

OPTIONAL GO DEEPER: Read all about it in Numbers 21:21-25; Deuteronomy 6:10-15; Joshua 18:1; 21:43-45.

15. Look carefully at **Nehemiah 9:26-31** to see what events they are recounting. Circle the words “but”, “therefore”, “yet”, and “however” in these verses. What pattern do you notice? What truth about God is being proclaimed?

GO DEEPER: Read all about it in Judges 2:11-14; 16-19; 2 Chronicles 36:14-16; Zechariah 7:11-12.

16. Look carefully at **Nehemiah 9:32-38**. Up to this point in the prayer they have been focusing on past events. What do you notice about this final section in their prayer? What is the focus now?
17. What is their current situation (verse 36), what is it like for them (verse 32 & 37), and whose fault do they say it is (verse 37)?
18. How do they say they have been dealt with according to verse 33?

Think about it: Can we be real with God? Is it okay to say it's hard while we admit it is just?

19. What truths about God are being proclaimed in Nehemiah 9:32-33? (Compare this with vs. 1:5)

Use the following application questions as catalyst to allow God to speak to your heart. Add your own application questions as the Spirit leads you.

APPLY IT – Chapter Nine

Do you come before God with an attitude of humility when needs are great? Where do you find yourself turning for help and perspective? Are you willing to encourage others to cry out to the Lord when they have needs?

When you come to the Lord do you remember to praise Him? Do you acknowledge that He alone is Lord – and that He is Creator God? Do you regularly meditate on who He is and on all the Lord has done for His people throughout the ages to show His grace, mercy, compassion, and loving-kindness? Do you regularly recount on all that He has done in your life? Do you mourn over sin? Do you acknowledge He is just in all His ways, and seek His mercy with honest confession? Remember- you can be real with God and admit it is hard as you cry out for mercy and grace.

NEHEMIAH - CHAPTERS TEN and ELEVEN

we are making an agreement in writing

The nation had lost its way. Though God was faithful they had acted wickedly and were suffering the consequences of their sin. Find out what the children of Israel decided to do about it in chapters 9-11.

Begin by asking the Lord to give you wisdom, insight, and understanding as you study His Word.

Chapter Ten

1. Carefully read through Nehemiah chapter 10 to understand what this chapter is all about.
2. When do the events of this chapter take place? (See Nehemiah 9:1-3, 38)
3. In 9:38 what do the people say they are doing and why? How does chapter ten go with chapter nine?

4. Using the divisions listed below, give a brief description of the main event/s of each section:

Verses 1-27

Verses 28-39

5. How many people were going along with this agreement?
6. How are the people described in Verse 28?
7. How many of the Lord's commandments were they agreeing to observe? (verse 29)
8. How did they know what they needed to do? (Look for a word repeated in verses 29, 34 and 36)
9. Notice the phrase "we will" in verses 10:28-39. Briefly note the main issues they address in their agreement:

Think about it: How did recounting the events of the past strengthen their resolve to obey God now?

Chapter Eleven

10. Carefully read through Nehemiah chapter eleven to understand what this chapter is about. Look for and underline or circle each time “*Jerusalem*” is mentioned.

OPTIONAL GO DEEPER: Spend some time on careful observations as you read through chapter eleven. Look for other repeated words/phrases, contrasts and/or comparisons, terms of conclusion, etc.

11. Go back and read Nehemiah 7:3-4 and compare it with the events of chapter eleven. What problem were the people dealing with in chapter eleven?

12. Reread Nehemiah 11:1-3 and note what you learn about the leaders, how the people solved the problem mentioned in chapter 7, and what their attitude was like:

13. Using the divisions listed below in chapter 11, give a brief description of the main event/s of each section:

Verses 4-9

Verses 10-19

Verses 20-24

Verses 25-36

GO DEEPER: Consult a map of Israel/Judah in Nehemiah’s day and locate as many of the villages and towns mentioned in verses 25-36 as you can. Note where the sons of Judah and sons of Benjamin were located in relation to Jerusalem.

Use the following application questions as catalyst to allow God to speak to your heart. Add your own application questions as the Spirit leads you.

APPLY IT – Chapters Ten and Eleven

Are you committed to studying and obeying God’s Word? Are you no longer conformed to the world and walking in newness of life by the power of the Spirit? Do others recognize that you belong to Him? Are there any situations you have faced where you had to sacrifice and be uncomfortable in order to do God’s will? Do you bless and encourage others when they do difficult things for the work of God’s kingdom? Do you know what your spiritual gifts are, and are you using them to serve the body?

NEHEMIAH - CHAPTER TWELVE

God had given them great joy

The task has been completed, the enemies overcome, sins confessed, and the Lord has been worshiped. Now all that is left to do is celebrate.

Begin by asking the Lord to give you wisdom, insight, and understanding as you study His Word.

1. Read through Nehemiah chapter twelve at a fairly quick pace to get a general idea of what this chapter is all about.
2. Carefully read through chapter twelve again to comprehend the details. Look for references to time (days, months, years, when, then, etc.) and draw a clock symbol in the margin or mark as you previously have. Also look for and underline each use of “*priest*” and “*Levites*”.

OPTIONAL GO DEEPER: Spend some time on careful observations as you read through chapter twelve. Look for other repeated words/phrases, contrasts/comparisons, terms of conclusion, lists, etc.

Now Answer the following questions from chapter twelve using words right from the text as much as possible:

Chapter Twelve Verses 1-27

3. What is the main event being described in this chapter? (Verse 27)
4. What do verses 1-26 have to do with it?

Chapter Twelve Verses 27-39

5. What three things were they to celebrate with? (Verse 27)
6. Before they could begin, what four things did the priests and Levites need to purify?
7. Where did Nehemiah have the people and the choirs walking? (Compare with Nehemiah 4:3.)

GO DEEPER: Trace the routes the two choirs took on a map of Jerusalem.

Chapter Twelve Verses 40-47

8. Reread Nehemiah 12:40-47 and underline or circle the words “joy” and “rejoiced.”
9. Write out a list of what you learn. Note who rejoiced, when, and why:

10. How far did the sound of their joy carry?

OPTIONAL GO DEEPER: Look up 1 Chronicles 9:33; 15:16; and 25:1 for additional insights. Note what you learn:

11. What were the sons of Israel to do for the Levites in exchange for their service?

OPTIONAL GO DEEPER: Look up Numbers 18:20-28 to learn more.

Use the following application questions as catalyst to allow God to speak to your heart. Add your own application questions as the Spirit leads you

APPLY IT – Chapter Twelve

Have you taken time lately to celebrate all that the Lord has accomplished in your life so far? He has brought you out of darkness and into the kingdom of His beloved Son; He has caused you to be born again to a living hope; He has taken your sins and nailed them to the cross; He has given you His righteousness; He has made all things new; He has given you His Spirit as a pledge of your eternal inheritance; He has given you spiritual gifts; He has enabled you to do His will, accomplish His purposes, and work for His kingdom; He has made you His child and poured out His love on you, and more!! Grab your cymbals, harps, and lyres (or whatever instruments you happen to have lying around) and put on your favorite hymns of praise. Sing to the Lord, lift high His holy Name! Grab your friends, co-workers, neighbors, or kids, and have a procession of praise. Let your rejoicing be heard from afar because the Lord has given you great joy. What are you waiting for? Get Going! ☺

NEHEMIAH - CHAPTER THIRTEEN

for this also remember me, O my God

What happens when the celebration is over and life goes on? What danger lurks around the corner, and what must one be willing to do? This important final chapter in the book of Nehemiah is filled with sobering lessons and challenging calls to actions.

Begin by praising the Lord for all He has shown you and all He has done in your heart. Read and pray through Psalm 119:97-104

1. Read through Nehemiah chapter thirteen at a fairly quick pace to get a general idea of what this chapter is all about.
2. Carefully read through chapter thirteen again to comprehend the details. Look for references to time and draw a clock symbol or mark as you have previously.

OPTIONAL GO DEEPER: Spend some time on careful observations as you read through chapter thirteen. Look for other repeated words or phrases, contrasts and/or comparisons, terms of conclusion, lists, etc.

3. Summarize what takes place in verses 1-3.

OPTIONAL GO DEEPER: Look up the following cross-references to learn more about what they did and what was written. Record any important insights:

Deuteronomy 31:10-12

Numbers 21:21-25

Numbers 22:1-6

Numbers 23:5-11

Deuteronomy 23:3-5

Genesis 12:3

4. Reread **Nehemiah 13:4-5** and note who did what for whom.

OPTIONAL GO DEEPER: Review all Tobiah has done by reading the following passages: Nehemiah 2:10, 19; Nehemiah 4:3, 7-8, Nehemiah 6:12, 17-19.

5. What important information do you learn in Nehemiah 13:6 about Nehemiah and where he was? (Compare this with Nehemiah 5:14.)

6. According to verse 13:7, what did Nehemiah learn about when he returned?

7. What does this tell you about the timing of the events in verses 4-5?

8. Carefully reread **Nehemiah 13:6-28**. As you read through each section listed below use the chart at end of this lesson titled ***What Nehemiah Did and Saw*** to briefly record what Nehemiah saw, learned, or discovered, and what he said or did about it. (Look for the phrases “*so I*” and “*then I*”)

- Read verses 13:7-9 and record what you learn on the chart ***What Nehemiah Did and Saw***.

Think about it: What was Nehemiah’s attitude toward sin (verse 8), why did he have that attitude, and how did it affect his actions?

- Read verses 13:10-13 and record what you learn on the chart ***What Nehemiah Did and Saw***.

Think about it: Where did the Levites and singers go? Why had the house of God been forsaken? What kind of person was needed to be in charge?

- Read verses 13:15-22 and record what you learn on the chart ***What Nehemiah Did and Saw***.

Think about it: Look carefully at all who were rebuked; if leaders compromise should people be held accountable for sin? How does Nehemiah refer to their actions (verse 17) and what motivation does he use to persuade them?

GO DEEPER: Look up the following cross-references to learn more about what they did and what Nehemiah was referring to. Record any important insights:

Exodus 20:8; 23:12; 31:15; 34:21

Deuteronomy 5:12-15

Jeremiah 17:19-27

Jeremiah 52:12-16

- Read verses 13:23-28 and record what you learn on the chart ***What Nehemiah Did and Saw***.

Think about it: Why does Nehemiah use Solomon as an example? Who is their sin really against (verse 27) and why is it important?

GO DEEPER: Look up the following cross-references to learn more about what they did and what Nehemiah was referring to. Record any important insights:

Exodus 23:31-33

Exodus 34:11-16

Deuteronomy 7:1-6

Deuteronomy 17:14-20

1 Kings 6:11-13

1 Kings 9:2-7

1 Kings 11:1-13

9. Quickly scan over all the facts you recorded on your chart and then go back to Nehemiah 13:6 and note once again where Nehemiah was when all these things had come about. How does he sum up all he did in **Nehemiah 13:30-31**?

10. Spend a few minutes thinking about and pondering over all you learned. Look over your chart and reflect on what it would have been like to return to all the heartbreaking things Nehemiah saw and discovered when he arrived to check up on the people he fought for and labored so hard over. Think about all the hard things he had to say and do.

11. Read through Nehemiah chapter 13 one more time. As you read, pay special attention to Nehemiah's prayers. Highlight, color, or put a star or other symbol in the margin next to each one the same way you did for the prayers in the previous chapters.

12. Take the chart you filled in about all Nehemiah said and did, and use the empty column to note when Nehemiah prayed (list the verse reference for each prayer in the section it would fit in) and note briefly who and what he prayed for.

13. See if you notice a pattern: How did his prayers line up with his actions?

Think about it: Is it easy to be a "restorer of righteousness?" Would all he said and did have been received warmly? Where was Nehemiah's focus as he said and did the tough things he had to do and why was this important? Why did he pray for the things he did in midst of these circumstances?

GO DEEPER: Nehemiah's prayers reflected his intimate and abiding knowledge of and faith in His God. Look up the following verses and record the truths that are reflected in Nehemiah's prayers:

Jeremiah 17:10

Psalms 62:12

Psalms 97:10

Psalms 55:22

Psalms 11:4-7

14. Finish your study by briefly reviewing all you have seen in this book. It all begins with the news Nehemiah received about the condition of the walls and the distress upon his brethren in Jerusalem. Next to each section below write the word “**action**” or “**prayer**” to describe what is happening:

Nehemiah 1:4-11

Nehemiah 2:1-3

Nehemiah 2:4

Nehemiah 2:5-20

Nehemiah 3:1-32

Nehemiah 4: 1-5

Nehemiah 4:6-8

Nehemiah 4:9

Nehemiah 4:10-23

Nehemiah 5:1-18

Nehemiah 5:19

Nehemiah 6:1-8

Nehemiah 6:9-14

Nehemiah 6:15-8:5

Nehemiah 8:6

Nehemiah 8:7-18

Nehemiah 9:1-4

Nehemiah 9:5-38

Nehemiah 10:1-13:3

Nehemiah 13:4-13

Nehemiah 13:14

Nehemiah 13:15-21

Nehemiah 13:22

Nehemiah 13:23-28

Nehemiah 13:29-31

15. When did Nehemiah give up?

Think about it: What do you learn from this about the relationship to prayer and action?

16. Read Psalm 37:5-6. What important truth must you remember when your work for Christ meets resistance, brings reproach, wears you down, tests your patience, and does not end the way you planned?

Use the following application questions as catalyst to allow God to speak to your heart. Add your own application questions as the Spirit leads you

APPLY IT – Chapters 12-13

What about you? When you see sin in the lives of God’s children or in His church is it very displeasing to you? Does it grieve your heart? Does it move you to action? Are you willing to speak up and do what is necessary to restore righteousness? Or are you tempted to tolerate sin, excuse sin, and accept sin? Do you realize that God takes sin seriously?

When Nehemiah cleaned house how much did he throw out? Isn’t it okay to have a little “rubbish” in the house of God? How much does it take to defile the heart, home, soul, and abode of the Lord?

Are you willing to “clean house” and throw out the rubbish that defiles your heart, home, and pursuit of holiness? Is there any garbage that you need to get rid of? How about TV shows, movies or books with profanity, nudity, or immoral behavior and innuendos? How about thoughts or daydreams that do not promote holiness, purity, and righteousness? What about computer or video games that glorify violence, debauchery, godlessness, or murder? Ask the Lord to bring to mind anything else in your life that is “rubbish” and hindering you from holiness.

Are you willing to exhort and help others get rid of the garbage in their lives? Will you stand by them and work with them when the going gets tough? Are you reliable and trustworthy to do the work of the Lord? Will you call sin what it is - evil? Will you point people to God’s Word and call them to obedience and lead by example?

Is it hard for you to speak up and be a restorer of righteousness? Remember that God sees and rewards those who obey Him and do His will. Fix your eyes and heart on Him and not your circumstances or people. Pray while you work; fervently seeking the Lord while you keep walking in obedience and working for God. Will you choose to stand firm, press on, and not give up?

Close your time with the Lord in prayer. Reread Nehemiah 13:14, 22, and 31 and turn these verses into a prayer to your great and awesome God.

Well done dear sons and daughters of the King— you have come to the end of your study in Nehemiah. You know how to face your challenges, deal with your enemies, and keep your focus. May the great and awesome, Most High God, the Ruler over the realm of mankind, fill you with wisdom, boldness, and strength to accomplish the seemingly impossible tasks that He calls you to for His kingdom and Great Name. May you keep your eyes fixed on Him alone, diligently work at your “section” and boldly speak His truths until He comes for you. Finish strong, beloved! Seek the Lord, seek righteousness, and seek to hunger and thirst for His Word more than ever before, so that you can stand firm and proclaim His excellencies until He comes.

And now there is only one more question to answer: Which book of the Bible will you study next? ☺

What Nehemiah Did and Saw

Verse references	What Nehemiah saw/discovered	What Nehemiah said	What Nehemiah did	
13:7-9				
13:10-13				
13:15-22				
13: 23:28				

A Prayer and A Plan

With the God of Heaven You Can!

Appendix

Nehemiah Chapter 1

- 1 The words of Nehemiah the son of Hacaliah. Now it happened in the month Chislev, *in* the twentieth year, while I was in Susa the capitol,
- 2 that Hanani, one of my brothers, and some men from Judah came; and I asked them concerning the Jews who had escaped *and* had survived the captivity, and about Jerusalem.
- 3 They said to me, “The remnant there in the province who survived the captivity are in great distress and reproach, and the wall of Jerusalem is broken down and its gates are burned with fire.”
- 4 When I heard these words, I sat down and wept and mourned for days; and I was fasting and praying before the God of heaven.
- 5 I said, “I beseech You, O LORD God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who preserves the covenant and lovingkindness for those who love Him and keep His commandments,
- 6 “let Your ear now be attentive and Your eyes open to hear the prayer of Your servant which I am praying before You now, day and night, on behalf of the sons of Israel Your servants, confessing the sins of the sons of Israel which we have sinned against You; I and my father’s house have sinned.
- 7 “We have acted very corruptly against You and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the ordinances which You commanded Your servant Moses.
- 8 “Remember the word which You commanded Your servant Moses, saying, ‘If you are unfaithful I will scatter you among the peoples;
- 9 but *if* you return to Me and keep My commandments and do them, though those of you who have been scattered were in the most remote part of the heavens, I will gather them from there and will bring them to the place where I have chosen to cause My name to dwell.’

- 10 “They are Your servants and Your people whom You redeemed by Your great power and by Your strong hand.
- 11 “O Lord, I beseech You, may Your ear be attentive to the prayer of Your servant and the prayer of Your servants who delight to revere Your name, and make Your servant successful today and grant him compassion before this man.” Now I was the cupbearer to the king.

Nehemiah Chapter 2

- 1 And it came about in the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, that wine *was* before him, and I took up the wine and gave it to the king. Now I had not been sad in his presence.
- 2 So the king said to me, “Why is your face sad though you are not sick? This is nothing but sadness of heart.” Then I was very much afraid.
- 3 I said to the king, “Let the king live forever. Why should my face not be said when the city, the place of my fathers’ tombs, lies desolate and its gates have been consumed by fire?”
- 4 Then the king said to me, “What would you request?” So I prayed to the God of heaven.
- 5 I said to the king, “If it please the king, and if your servant has found favor before you, send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers’ tombs, that I may rebuild it.”
- 6 Then the king said to me, the queen sitting beside him, “How long will your journey be, and when will you return?” So it pleased the king to send me, and I gave him a definite time.
- 7 And I said to the king, “If it please the king, let letters be given to me for the governors *of the provinces* beyond the River, that they may allow me to pass through until I come to Judah,
- 8 and a letter to Asaph the keeper of the king’s forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the fortress which is by the temple, for the wall of the city and for the house to which I will go.” And the king granted *them* to me because the good hand of my God *was* on me.
- 9 Then I came to the governors *of the provinces* beyond the River and gave them the king’s letters. Now the king had sent with me officers of the army and horsemen.

- 10 When Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite official heard *about it*, it was very displeasing to them that someone had come to seek the welfare of the sons of Israel.
- 11 So I came to Jerusalem and was there three days.
- 12 And I arose in the night, I and a few men with me. I did not tell anyone what my God was putting into my mind to do for Jerusalem and there was no animal with me except the animal on which I was riding.
- 13 So I went out at night by the Valley Gate in the direction of the Dragon's Well and *on* to the Refuse Gate, inspecting the walls of Jerusalem which were broken down and its gates which were consumed by fire.
- 14 Then I passed on to the Fountain Gate and the King's Pool, but there was no place for my mount to pass.
- 15 So I went up at night by the ravine and inspected the wall. Then I entered the Valley Gate again and returned.
- 16 The officials did not know where I had gone or what I had done; nor had I as yet told the Jews, the priests, the nobles, the officials or the rest who did the work.
- 17 Then I said to them, "You see the bad situation we are in, that Jerusalem is desolate and its gates burned by fire. Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem so that we will no longer be a reproach."
- 18 I told them how the hand of my God had been favorable to me and also about the king's words which he had spoken to me. Then they said, "Let us arise and build." So they put their hands to the good *work*.
- 19 But when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite official, and Geshem the Arab heard *it*, they mocked us and despised us and said, "What is this thing you are doing? Are you rebelling against the king?"
- 20 So I answered them and said to them, "The God of heaven will give us success; therefore we His servants will arise and build, but you have no portion, right or memorial in Jerusalem."

Nehemiah Chapter 3

- 1 Then Eliashib the high priest arose with his brothers the priests and built the Sheep Gate; they consecrated it and hung its doors. They consecrated the wall to the Tower of the Hundred *and* the Tower of Hananel.
- 2 Next to him the men of Jericho built, and next to them Zaccur the son of Imri built.
- 3 Now the sons of Hassenaah built the Fish Gate; they laid its beams and hung its doors with its bolts and bars.
- 4 Next to them Meremoth the son of Uriah the son of Hakkoz made repairs. And next to him Meshullam the son of Berechiah the son of Meshezabel made repairs. And next to him Zadok the son of Baana *also* made repairs.
- 5 Moreover, next to him the Tekoites made repairs, but their nobles did not support the work of their masters.
- 6 Joiada the son of Paseah and Meshullam the son of Besodeiah repaired the Old Gate; they laid its beams and hung its doors with its bolts and its bars.
- 7 Next to them Melatiah the Gibeonite and Jadon the Meronothite, the men of Gibeon and of Mizpah, also made repairs for the official seat of the governor *of the province* beyond the River.
- 8 Next to him Uzziel the son of Harhaiah of the goldsmiths made repairs. And next to him Hananiah, one of the perfumers, made repairs, and they restored Jerusalem as far as the Broad Wall.
- 9 Next to them Rephaiah the son of Hur, the official of half the district of Jerusalem, made repairs.
- 10 Next to them Jedaiah the son of Harumaph made repairs opposite his house. And next to him Hattush the son of Hashabneiah made repairs.
- 11 Malchijah the son of Harim and Hasshub the son of Pahathmoab repaired another section and the Tower of Furnaces.

- 12 Next to him Shallum the son of Hallohesh, the official of half the district of Jerusalem, made repairs, he and his daughters.
- 13 Hanun and the inhabitants of Zanoah repaired the Valley Gate. They built it and hung its doors with its bolts and its bars, and a thousand cubits of the wall to the Refuse Gate.
- 14 Malchijah the son of Rechab, the official of the district of Beth-haccherem repaired the Refuse Gate. He built it and hung its doors with its bolts and its bars.
- 15 Shallum the son of Col-hozeh, the official of the district of Mizpah, repaired the Fountain Gate. He built it, covered it and hung its doors with its bolts and its bars, and the wall of the Pool of Shelah at the king's garden as far as the steps that descend from the city of David.
- 16 After him Nehemiah the son of Azbuk, official of half the district of Beth-zur, made repairs as far as *a point* opposite the tombs of David, and as far as the artificial pool and the house of the mighty men.
- 17 After him the Levites carried out repairs *under* Rehum the son of Bani. Next to him Hashabiah, the official of half the district of Keilah, carried out repairs for his district.
- 18 After him their brothers carried out repairs *under* Bavvai the son of Henadad, official of *the other* half of the district of Keilah.
- 19 Next to him Ezer the son of Jeshua, the official of Mizpah, repaired another section in front of the ascent of the armory at the Angle.
- 20 After him Baruch the son on Zabbai zealously repaired another section, from the Angle to the doorway of the house of Eliashib the high priest.
- 21 After him Meremoth the son of Uriah the son of Hakkoz repaired another section, from the doorway of Eliashib's house even as far as the end of his house.
- 22 After him the priests, the men of the valley, carried out repairs.
- 23 After them Benjamin and Hasshub carried out repairs in front of their house. After them Azariah the son of Maaseiah, son of Ananiah, carried out repairs beside his house.

- 24 After him Binnui the son of Henedad repaired another section, from the house of Azariah as far as the Angle and as far as the corner.
- 25 Palal the son of Uzai *made repairs* in front of the Angle and the tower projecting from the upper house of the king, which is by the court of the guard. After him Pedaiah the son of Parosh *made repairs*.
- 26 The temple servants living in Ophel *made repairs* as far as the front of the Water Gate toward the east and the projecting tower.
- 27 After them the Tekoites repaired another section in front of the great projecting tower and as far as the wall of Ophel.
- 28 Above the Horse Gate the priests carried out repairs, each in front of his house.
- 29 After them Zadok the son of Immer carried out repairs in front of his house. And after him Shemaiah the son of Shecaniah, the keeper of the East Gate, carried out repairs.
- 30 After him Hananiah the son of Shelemiah, and Hanun the sixth son of Zalaph, repaired another section. After him Meshullam the son of Berechiah carried out repairs in front of his own quarters.
- 31 After him Malchijah, one of the goldsmiths, carried out repairs as far as the house of the temple servants and of the merchants, in front of the Inspection Gate and as far as the upper room of the corner.
- 32 Between the upper room of the corner and the Sheep Gate the goldsmiths and the merchants carried out repairs.

Nehemiah Chapter 4

- 1 Now it came about that when Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, he became furious and very angry and mocked the Jews.
- 2 He spoke in the presence of his brothers and the wealthy *men* of Samaria and said, “What are these feeble Jews doing? Are they going to restore *it* for themselves? Can they offer sacrifices? Can they finish in a day? Can they revive the stones from the dusty rubble even the burned ones?”
- 3 Now Tobiah the Ammonite *was* near him and he said, “Even what they are building— if a fox should jump on *it*, he would break their stone wall down!”
- 4 Hear, O our God, how we are despised! Return their reproach on their own heads and give them up for plunder in a land of captivity.
- 5 Do not forgive their iniquity and let nor their sin be blotted out before You, for they have demoralized the builders.
- 6 So we built the wall and the whole wall was joined together to half its *height*, for the people had a mind to work.
- 7 Now when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites and the Ashdodites heard that the repair of the walls of Jerusalem went on, *and* that the breaches began to be closed, they were very angry.
- 8 All of them conspired together to come *and* fight against Jerusalem and to cause a disturbance in it.
- 9 But we prayed to our God, and because of them we set up a guard against them day and night.
- 10 Thus in Judah it was said, “The strength of the burden bearers is failing, Yet there is much rubbish; And we ourselves are unable To rebuild the wall.”
- 11 Our enemies said, “They will not know or see until we come among them, kill them and put a stop to the work.”

- 12 When the Jews who lived near them came and told us ten times, “They will come up against us from every place where you may turn,”
- 13 then I stationed *men* in the lowest parts of the space behind the wall, the exposed places, and I stationed the people in families with their swords, spears and bows.
- 14 When I saw *their fear*, I rose and spoke to the nobles, the officials and the rest of the people: “Do not be afraid of them; remember the Lord who is great and awesome, and fight for your brothers, your sons, your daughters, your wives and your houses.”
- 15 When our enemies heard that it was known to us, and that God had frustrated their plan, then all of us returned to the wall, each one to his work.
- 16 From that day on, half of my servants carried on the work while half of them held the spears, the shields, the bows and the breastplates; and the captains *were* behind the whole house of Judah.
- 17 Those who were rebuilding the wall and those who carried burdens took *their* load with one hand doing the work and the other holding a weapon.
- 18 As for the builders, each *wore* his sword girded at his side as he built, while the trumpeter *stood* near me.
- 19 I said to the nobles, the officials and the rest of the people, “The work is great and extensive, and we are separated on the wall far from one another.
- 20 “At whatever place you hear the sound of the trumpet, rally to us there. Our God will fight for us.”
- 21 So we carried on the work with half of them holding spears from dawn until the stars appeared.
- 22 At that time I also said to the people, “Let each man with his servant spend the night within Jerusalem so that they may be a guard for us by night and a laborer by day.”
- 23 So neither I, my brothers, my servants, nor the men of the guard who followed me, none of us removed our clothes, each *took* his weapon *even to* the water.

Nehemiah Chapter 5

- 1 Now there was a great outcry of the people and of their wives against their Jewish brothers.
- 2 For there were those who said, “We, our sons and our daughters are many; therefore let us get grain that we may eat and live.”
- 3 There were others who said, “We are mortgaging our fields, our vineyards and our houses that we might get grain because of the famine.”
- 4 Also there were those who said, “We have borrowed money for the king’s tax *on* our fields and our vineyards.
- 5 “Now our flesh is like the flesh of our brothers, our children like their children. Yet behold, we are forcing our sons and our daughters to be slaves, and some of our daughters are forced into bondage *already*, and we are helpless because our fields and vineyards belong to others.”
- 6 Then I was very angry when I had heard their outcry and these words.
- 7 I consulted with myself and contended with the nobles and the rulers and said to them, “You are exacting usury, each from his brother!” Therefore, I held a great assembly against them.
- 8 I said to them, “We according to our ability have redeemed our Jewish brothers who were sold to the nations; now would you even sell your brothers that they may be sold to us?” Then they were silent and could not find a word *to say*.
- 9 Again I said, “The thing which you are doing is not good; should you not walk in the fear of our God because of the reproach of the nations, our enemies?”
- 10 “And likewise I, my brothers and my servants are lending them money and grain. Please, let us leave off this usury.
- 11 “Please, give back to them this very day their fields, their vineyards, their olive groves and their houses, also the hundredth *part* of the money and of the grain, the new wine and the oil that you are exacting from them.”

- 12 Then they said, “We will give *it* back and will require nothing from them; we will do exactly as you say.” So I called the priests and took an oath from them that they would do according to this promise.
- 13 I also shook out the front of my garment and said, “Thus may God shake out every man from his house and from his possessions who does not fulfill this promise; even thus may he be shaken out and emptied.” And all the assembly said, “Amen!” And they praised the LORD. Then the people did according to this promise.
- 14 Moreover, from the day that I was appointed to be their governor in the land of Judah, from the twentieth year to the thirty-second year of King Artaxerxes, *for* twelve years, neither I nor my kinsmen have eaten the governor’s food *allowance*.
- 15 But the former governors who were before me laid burdens on the people and took from them bread and wine besides forty shekels of silver; even their servants domineered the people. But I did not do so because of the fear of God.
- 16 I also applied myself to the work on this wall; we did not buy any land, and all my servants were gathered there for the work.
- 17 Moreover, *there were* at my table one hundred and fifty Jews and officials, besides those who came to us from the nations that were around us.
- 18 Now that which was prepared for each day was one ox *and* six choice sheep, also birds were prepared for me; and once in ten days all sorts of wine *were furnished* in abundance. Yet for all this I did not demand the governor’s food *allowance*, because the servitude was heavy on this people.
- 19 Remember me, O my God, for good *according to* all that I have done for this people.

Nehemiah Chapter 6

- 1 Now when it was reported to Sanballat, Tobiah, to Geshem the Arab and to the rest of our enemies that I had rebuilt the wall, and *that* no breach remained in it, although at that time I had not set up the doors in the gates,
- 2 then Sanballat and Geshem sent *a message* to me, saying, “Come, let us meet together at Chephirim in the plain of Ono.” But they were planning to harm me.
- 3 So I sent messengers to them, saying, “I am doing a great work and I cannot come down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and come down to you?”
- 4 They sent *messages* to me four times in this manner, and I answered them in the same way.
- 5 Then Sanballat sent his servant to me in the same manner a fifth time with an open letter in his hand.
- 6 In it was written, “It is reported among the nations, and Gashmu says, that you and the Jews are planning to rebel; therefore you are rebuilding the wall. And you are to be their king, according to these reports.
- 7 “You have also appointed prophets to proclaim in Jerusalem concerning you, ‘A king is in Judah!’ And not it will be reported to the king according to these reports. So come now, let us take counsel together.”
- 8 Then I sent *a message* to him saying, “Such things as you are saying have not been done, but you are inventing them in your own mind.”
- 9 For all of them were *trying* to frighten us, thinking, “They will become discouraged with the work and it will not be done.” But now, *O God*, strengthen my hands.
- 10 When I entered the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah, son of Mehetabel, who was confined at home, he said, “Let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple, and let us close the doors of the temple, for they are coming to kill you, and they are coming to kill you at night.

- 11 But I said, “Should a man like me flee? And could one such as I go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in.”
- 12 Then I perceived that surely God had not sent him, but he uttered *his* prophecy against me because Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him.
- 13 He was hired for this reason, that I might become frightened and act accordingly and sin, so that they might have an evil report in order that they could reproach me.
- 14 Remember, O my God, Tobiah and Sanballat according to these works of theirs, and also Noadiah the prophetess and the rest of the prophets who were *trying* to frighten me.
- 15 So the wall was completed on the twenty-fifth of *the month* Elul, in fifth-two days.
- 16 When all our enemies heard *of it*, and all the nations surrounding us say *it*, they lost their confidence; for they recognized that this work had been accomplished with the help of our God.
- 17 Also in those days many letters went from the nobles of Judah to Tobiah, and Tobiah’s *letters* came to them.
- 18 For many in Judah were bound by oath to him because he was the son-in-law of Shecaniah the son of Arah, and his son Jehohanan had married the daughter of Meshullam the son of Berechiah.
- 19 Moreover, they were speaking about his good deeds in my presence and reported my words to him. Then Tobiah sent letters to frighten me.

Nehemiah Chapter 7

- 1 Now when the wall was rebuilt and I had set up the doors, and the gatekeepers and the singers and the Levites were appointed,
- 2 then I put Hanani my brother, and Hananiah the commander of the fortress, in charge of Jerusalem, for he was a faithful man and feared God more than many.
- 3 Then I said to them, “Do not let the gates of Jerusalem be opened until the sun is hot, and while they are standing *guard*, let them shut and bolt the doors. Also appoint guards from the inhabitants of Jerusalem, each at his post, and each in front of his own house.”
- 4 now the city was large and spacious, but the people in it were few and the houses were not built.
- 5 Then my God put in into my heart to assemble the nobles, the officials and the people to be enrolled by genealogies. Then I found the book of the genealogy of those who came up first in which I found the following record:
- 6 These are the people of the province who came up from the captivity of the exiles whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away, and who returned to Jerusalem and Judah, each to his city,
- 7 who came with Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Azariah, Raamiah, Nahamani, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispereth, Bigvai, Nehum, Baanah. The number of men of the people of Israel:
- 8 the sons of Parosh, 2,172;
- 9 the sons of Shephatiah, 372;
- 10 the sons of Arah, 652;
- 11 the sons of Pahath-moab of the sons of Jeshua and Joab, 2,818;
- 12 the sons of Elam, 1,254;
- 13 the sons of Zattu, 845;
- 14 the sons of Zaccai, 760;

- 15 the sons of Binnui, 648;
- 16 the sons of Bebai, 628;
- 17 the sons of Azgad, 2,322;
- 18 the sons of Adonikam, 667;
- 19 the sons of Bigvai, 2,067;
- 20 the sons of Adin, 655;
- 21 the sons of Ater, of Hezekiah, 98;
- 22 the sons of Hashum, 328;
- 23 the sons of Bezai, 324;
- 24 the sons of Hariph, 112;
- 25 the sons of Gibeon, 95;
- 26 the men of Bethlehem and Netophah, 188;
- 27 the men of Anathoth, 128;
- 28 the men of Beth-azmaveth, 42;
- 29 the men of Kiriath-jearim, Chephirah and Beeroth, 743;
- 30 the men of Ramah and Geba, 621;
- 31 the men of Michmas, 122;
- 32 the men of Bethel and Ai, 123;
- 33 the men of the other Nebo, 52;
- 34 the sons of the other Elam, 1,254;
- 35 the sons of Harim, 320;
- 36 the men of Jericho, 345;
- 37 the sons of Lod, Hadid and Ono, 721;
- 38 the sons of Senaah, 3,930;
- 39 The priests; the sons of Jedaiah of the house of Jeshua, 973;
- 40 the sons of Immer, 1,052;
- 41 the sons of Pashur, 1,247;
- 42 the sons of Harim, 1,017.
- 43 The Levites: the sons of Jeshua, of Kadmiel, of the sons of Hodevah, 74.

- 44 The singers: the sons of Asaph, 148.
- 45 The gatekeepers: the sons of Shallum, the sons of Ater, the sons of Talmon, the sons of Akkub, the sons of Hatita, the sons of Shobai, 138.
- 46 The temple servants: the sons of Ziha, the sons of Hasupha, the sons of Tabbaoth,
- 47 the sons of Keros, the sons of Sia, the sons of Padon,
- 48 the sons of Lebana, the sons of Hagaba, the sons of Shalmal,
- 49 the sons of Hanan, the sons of Giddel, the sons of Gahar,
- 50 the sons of Reaiah, the sons of Rezin, the sons of Nekoda,
- 51 the sons of Gazzam, the sons of Uzza, the sons of Paseah,
- 52 the sons of Besai, the sons of Meunim, the sons of Nephushesim,
- 53 the sons of Bakbuk, the sons of Hakupha, the sons of Harhur,
- 54 the sons of Bazlith, the sons of Mehida, the sons of Harsha,
- 55 the sons of Barkos, the sons of Sisera, the sons of Temah,
- 56 the sons of Neziah, the sons of Hatipha.
- 57 The sons of Solomon's servants: the sons of Sotai, the sons of Sophereth, the sons of Perida,
- 58 the sons of Jaala, the sons of Darkon, the sons of Giddel,
- 59 the sons of Shephatiah, the sons of Hattil, the sons of Pochereth-hazzebaim, the sons of Amon.
- 60 All the temple servants and the sons of Solomon's servants *were* 392.
- 61 These *were* they who came up from Tel-melah, Tel-harsha, Cherub, Addon and Immer; but they could not show their fathers' houses or their descendants, whether they were of Israel:
- 62 the sons of Delaiah, the sons of Tobiah, the sons of Nekoda, 642.
- 63 Of the priests: the sons of Hobaiah, the sons of Hakkoz, the sons of Barzillai, who took a wife of the daughters of Barzillai, the Gileadite, and was named after them.
- 64 These searched *among* their ancestral registration, but it could not be located; therefore they were considered unclean *and excluded* from the priesthood.

- 65 The governor said to them that they should not eat from the most holy things until a priest arose with Urim and Thummin.
- 66 The whole assembly together *was* 42,360,
- 67 besides their male and their female servants, of whom *there were* 7,337; and they had 245 male and female singers.
- 68 Their horses were 736; their mules, 245;
- 69 *their* camels, 435; *their* donkeys, 6,720.
- 70 Some from among the heads of fathers' *households* gave to the work. The governor gave to the treasury 1,000 gold drachmas, 50 basins, 530 priests' garments.
- 71 Some of the heads of the fathers' *household* gave into the treasury of the work 20,000 gold drachmas and 2,200 silver minas.
- 72 That which the rest of the people gave was 20,000 gold drachmas and 2,000 silver minas and 67 priests' garments.
- 73 Now the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, some of the people, the temple servants and all Israel, lived in their cities. And when the seventh month came, the sons of Israel *were* in their cities.

Nehemiah Chapter 8

- 1 And all the people gathered as one man at the square which was in front of the Water Gate, and they asked Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses which the LORD had given to Israel.
- 2 Then Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly of men, women and all who *could* listen with understanding, on the first day of the seventh month.
- 3 He read from it before the square which was in front of the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of men and women, those who could understand; and all the people were attentive to the book of the law.
- 4 Ezra the scribe stood at a wooden podium which they had made for the purpose. And beside him stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiah, and Maaseiah on his right hand; and Pedaiah, Mishael, Malchijah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah *and* Meshullan on his left hand.
- 5 Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people for he was standing above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up.
- 6 Then Ezra blessed the LORD the great God. And all the people answered, “Amen, Amen!” while lifting up their hands; then they bowed low and worshipped the LORD with *their* faces to the ground.
- 7 Also Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, the Levites, explained the law to the people while the people *remained* in their place.
- 8 They read from the book, from the law of God, translating to give the sense so that they understood the reading.
- 9 Then Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest *and* scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, “This day is holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn or weep.” For all the people were weeping when they heard the words of the law.

- 10 Then he said to them, “Go, eat of the fat, drink of the sweet, and send portions to him who has nothing prepared; for this day is hold to our Lord. Do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength.”
- 11 So the Levites calmed all the people, saying, “Be still, for the day is holy; do not be grieved.”
- 12 All the people went away to eat, to drink, to send portions and to celebrate a great festival, because they understood the words which had been made known to them.
- 13 Then on the second day the heads of fathers’ *households* of all the people, the priests and the Levites were gathered to Ezra the scribe that they might gain insight into the words of the law.
- 14 They found written in the law how the LORD had commanded through Moses that the sons of Israel should live in booths during the feast of the seventh month.
- 15 So they proclaimed and circulated a proclamation in all their cities and in Jerusalem, saying, “Go out to the hills, and bring olive branches and wild olive branches, myrtle branches, palm branches and branches of *other* leafy trees, to make booths, as it is written.”
- 16 So the people went out and brought *them* and made booths for themselves, each on his roof, and in their courts and in the courts of the house of God, and in the square at the Water Gate and in the square at the Gate of Ephraim.
- 17 The entire assembly of those who had returned from the captivity made booths and lived in them. The sons of Israel had indeed not done so from the days of Joshua the son of Nun to that day. And there was great rejoicing.
- 18 He read from the book of the law of God daily, from the first day to the last day. And they celebrated the feast seven days, and on the eighth day *there was* a solemn assembly according to the ordinance.

Nehemiah Chapter 9

- 1 Now on the twenty-fourth day of this month the sons of Israel assembled with fasting, in sackcloth and with dirt upon them.
- 2 The descendants of Israel separated themselves from all foreigners, and stood and confessed their sins and the iniquities of their fathers.
- 3 While they stood in their place, they read from the book of the law of the LORD their God for a fourth of the day; and for *another* fourth they confessed and worshiped the LORD their God.
- 4 Now on the Levites' platform stood Jeshua, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani *and* Chenani, and they cried with a loud voice to the LORD their God.
- 5 Then the Levites, Jeshua, Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabneiah, Sherebiah, Hodia, Shebaniah *and* Pethahiah, said, "Arise, bless the LORD your God forever and ever! O may Your glorious name be blessed And exalted above all blessing and praise!
- 6 "You alone are the LORD. You have made the heavens, The heaven of heavens with all their host, The earth and all that is on it, The seas and all that is in them. You give life to all of them And the heavenly host bows down before You.
- 7 "You are the LORD God, Who chose Abram And brought him out from Ur of the Chaldees, And gave him the name Abraham.
- 8 "You found his heart faithful before You, And made a covenant with him To give *him* the land of the Canaanite, Of the Hittite and the Amorite, Of the Perizzite, the Jebusite and the Girgashite—To give *it* to his descendants. And You have fulfilled Your promise, For You are righteous.
- 9 "You saw the affliction of our fathers in Egypt, And heard their cry by the Red Sea.
- 10 "Then You performed signs and wonders against Pharaoh, Against all his servants and all the people of his land; For you knew that they acted arrogantly toward them, And made a name for Yourself as *it is* this day.

- 11 “You divided the sea before them, So they passed through the midst of the sea on dry ground; And their pursuers You hurled into the depths, Like a stone into raging waters.
- 12 “And with a pillar of cloud You led them by day, And with a pillar of fire by night To light for them the way in which they were to go.
- 13 “Then You came down on Mount Sinai, And spoke with them from heaven; You gave them just ordinances and true laws, Good statutes and commandments.
- 14 “So You made known to them Your holy Sabbath, And laid down for them commandments, statutes and law, Through Your servant Moses.
- 15 “You provided bread from heaven for them for their hunger, You brought forth water from a rock for them for their thirst, And you told them to enter in order to possess The land which You swore to give them.
- 16 “But they, our fathers, acted arrogantly; They became stubborn and would not listen to Your commandments.
- 17 “They refused to listen, And did not remember Your wondrous deeds which You had performed among them; So they became stubborn and appointed a leader to return to their slavery in Egypt. But You are a God of forgiveness, Gracious and compassionate, Slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness; And You did not forsake them.
- 18 “Even when they made for themselves A calf of molten metal And said, ‘This is your God Who brought you up from Egypt,’ and committed great blasphemies,
- 19 “You, in Your great compassion, Did not forsake them in the wilderness; The pillar of cloud did not leave them by day, To guide them on their way, Nor the pillar of fire by night, to light for them the way in which they were to go.
- 20 “You gave Your good Spirit to instruct them, Your manna You did not withhold from their mouth, And You gave them water for their thirst.
- 21 “Indeed, forty years You provided for them in the wilderness *and* they were not in want; Their clothes did not wear out, nor did their feet swell.

- 22 “You also gave them kingdoms and peoples, And allotted *them* to them as a boundary. They took possession of the land of Sihon the king of Heshbon And the land of Og the king of Bashan.
- 23 “You made their sons numerous as the stars of heaven, And You brought them into the land Which You had told their fathers to enter and possess.
- 24 “So their sons entered and possessed the land. And You subdued before them the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, And You gave them into their hand, with their kings and the peoples of the land, To do with them as they desired.
- 25 “They captured fortified cities and a fertile land. They took possession of houses full of every good thing, Hewn cisterns, vineyards, olive groves, Fruit trees in abundance. So they ate, were filled and grew fat, And reveled in Your great goodness.
- 26 “But they became disobedient and rebelled against You, And cast Your law behind their backs And killed Your prophets who had admonished them So that they might return to You, And they committed great blasphemies.
- 27 “Therefore You delivered them into the hand of their oppressors who oppressed them, But when they cried to You in the time of their distress, You heard from heaven and according to Your great compassion You gave them deliverers who delivered them from the hand of their oppressors.
- 28 “But as soon as they had rest; they did evil again before You; Therefore You abandoned them to the hand of their enemies, so that they ruled over them. When they cried again to You, You heard from heaven, And many times You rescued them according to Your compassion,
- 29 “And admonished them in order to turn them back to Your law. Yet they acted arrogantly and did not listen to Your commandments but sinned against Your ordinances, By which if a man observes them he shall live. And they turned a stubborn shoulder and stiffened their neck, and would not listen.
- 30 “However, You bore with them for many years, And admonished them by Your Spirit through Your prophets, Yet they would not give ear. Therefore You gave them into the hand of the peoples of the lands.

- 31 “Nevertheless, in Your great compassion You did not make an end of them or forsake them, For You are a gracious and compassionate God.
- 32 “Now therefore, our God, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God, who keeps covenant and lovingkindness, Do not let all the hardship seem insignificant before You, Which has come upon us, our kings, our princes, our priests, our prophets, our fathers and on all Your people, From the days of the kings of Assyria to this day.
- 33 “However, You are just in all that has come upon us; For You have dealt faithfully, but we have acted wickedly.
- 34 “For our kings, our leaders, our priests and our fathers have not kept Your law Or paid attention to Your commandments and Your admonitions with which You have admonished them.
- 35 “But they, in their own kingdom, With Your great goodness which You gave them, With the broad and rich land which You set before them, Did not serve You or turn from their evil deeds.
- 36 “Behold, we are slaves today, And as to the land which You gave to our fathers to eat of its fruit and its bounty, Behold, we are slaves in it.
- 37 “Its abundant produce is for the kings Whom You have set over us because of our sins; They also rule over our bodies And over our cattle as they please, So we are in great distress.
- 38 “Now because of all this We are making an agreement in writing; And on the sealed document *are the names* of our leaders, our Levites *and* our priests.”

Nehemiah Chapter 10

- 1 Now on the sealed document *were the names of*: Nehemiah the governor, the son of Hacaliah, and Zedekiah,
- 2 Seraiah, Azariah, Jeremiah,
- 3 Pashhur, Amariah, Malchijah,
- 4 Hattush, Shebaniah, Malluch,
- 5 Harim, Meremoth, Obadiah,
- 6 Daniel, Ginnethon, Baruch,
- 7 Meshullam, Abijah, Mijamin,
- 8 Maaziah, Bilgai, Shemaiah: These *were* the priests.
- 9 And the Levites: Jeshua the son of Azaniah, Binnui of the sons of Henadad, Kadmiel;
- 10 also their brothers Shebaniah, Hodiah, Kelita, Pelaiah, Hanan,
- 11 Micha, Rehob, Hashabiah,
- 12 Zaccur, Sherebiah, Shebaniah,
- 13 Hodiah, Bani, Beninu.
- 14 The leaders of the people; Parosh, Pahath-moab, Elam, Zatthu, Bani,
- 15 Bunni, Azgad, Bebai,
- 16 Adonijah, Bigvai, Adin,
- 17 Ater, Hezekiah, Azzur,
- 18 Hodiah, Hashum, Bezai,
- 19 Hairph, Anathoth, Nebai,
- 20 Magpiash, Meshullam, Hezir,
- 21 Meshezabel, Zadok, Jaddua,
- 22 Pelatiah, Hanan, Anaiah,
- 23 Hoshea, Hananiah, Hasshub,
- 24 Hallohesh, Pilha, Shobek,
- 25 Rehum, Hashabnah, Maaseiah,

- 26 Ahiah, Hanan, Anan,
 27 Malluch, Harim, Baanah.
 28 Now the rest of the people, the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, the temple servants and all those who had separated themselves from the people of the lands to the law of God, their wives, their sons, and their daughters, all those who had knowledge, and understanding,
 29 are joining with their kinsmen, their nobles, and are taking on themselves a curse and an oath to walk in God's law, which was given through Moses, God's servant, and to keep and to observe all the commandments of GOD our Lord, and His ordinances and His statutes;
 30 and that we will not give our daughters to the peoples of the land or take their daughters for our sons.
 31 And for the peoples of the land who bring wares or any grain on the sabbath day to sell, we will not buy from them on the sabbath or a holy day; and we will forgo *the crops* the seventh year and the exaction of every debt.
 32 We also placed ourselves under obligation to contribute yearly one third of a shekel for the service of the house of our God:
 33 for the showbread, for the continual grain offering, for the continual burnt offering, the sabbaths, the new moon, for the appointed times, and for the holy things and for the sin offerings to make an atonement for Israel, and all the work of the house of our God.
 34 Likewise we cast lots for the supply of wood *among* the priests, the Levites, and the people so that they might bring it to the house of our God, according to our fathers' households, at fixed times annually, to burn on the altar of the LORD our God, as it is written in the law;
 35 and that they might bring the first fruits of our ground and the first fruits of every tree to the house of the LORD annually,

- 36 and bring to the house of our God the firstborn of our sons and of our cattle, and the firstborn of our herds and our flocks as it is written in the law, for the priests who are ministering in the house of our God.
- 37 We will also bring the first of our dough, our contributions, the fruit of every tree, the new wine and the oil to the priests at the chambers of the house of our God, and the tithe of our ground to the Levites, for the Levites are they who receive the tithes in all the rural towns.
- 38 The priest, the son of Aaron shall be with the Levites when the Levites receive tithes, and the Levites shall bring up the tenth of the tithes unto the house of our God, to the chambers of the storehouse.
- 39 For the sons of Israel and the sons of Levi shall bring the contribution of the grain, the new wine and the oil to the chambers; there are the utensils of the sanctuary, the priests who are ministering, the gatekeepers and the singers. Thus we will not neglect the house of our God.

Nehemiah Chapter 11

- 1 Now the leaders of the people lived in Jerusalem, but the rest of the people cast lots to bring one out of ten to live in Jerusalem, the holy city, while nine-tenths *remained* in the *other* cities.
- 2 And the people blessed all the men who volunteered to live in Jerusalem.
- 3 Now these are the heads of the province who lived in Jerusalem, but in the cities of Judah each lived on his own property in their cities—the Israelites, the priests, the Levites, the temple servants and the descendants of Solomon’s servants.
- 4 Some of the sons of Judah, and some of the sons of Benjamin lived in Jerusalem. From the sons of Judah: Athaiah the son of Uzziah, the son of Zechariah, the son of Amariah, the son of Shephatiah, the son of Mahallel, of the sons of Perez;
- 5 and Maaseiah the son of Baruch, the son of Col-hozeh, the son of Hazaiah, the son of Adaiah, the son of Joiarib, the son of Zechariah, the son of Shilonite.
- 6 All the sons of Perez who lived in Jerusalem were 468 able men.
- 7 Now these are the sons of Benjamin: Sallu the son of Meshullam, the son of Joed, the son of Pedaiah, the son of Kolaiah, the son of Maaseiah, the son of Ithiel, the son of Jeshaiiah.
- 8 and after him Gabbai *and* Sallai, 928.
- 9 Joel the son of Zichri was their overseer, and Judah the son of Hassenuah was second in command of the city.
- 10 From the priests: Jedaiah the son of Joiarib, Jachin,
- 11 Seraiah the son of Hilkiyah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Meraioth, the son of Ahitub, the leader of the house of God.
- 12 and their kinsmen who performed the work of the temple, 822; and Adaiah the son of Jeroham, the son of Pelaliah, the son of Amzi, the son of Zechariah, the son of Pashhur, the son of Malchijah,

- 13 and his kinsmen, heads of fathers' *households*, 242; and Amashai the son of Azarel, the son of Ahzai, the son of Meshillemoth, the son of Immer,
- 14 and their brothers, valiant warriors, 128. And their overseer was Zabdiel, the son of Haggadolim.
- 15 Now from the Levites: Shemaiah the son of Hashub, the son of Azrikam, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Bunni;
- 16 and Shabbethai and Jozabad, from the leaders of the Levites, who were in charge of the outside work of the house of God;
- 17 And Mattaniah the son of Mica, the son of Zabdi, the son of Asaph, who the leader in beginning the thanksgiving at prayer, and Bakbukiah, the second among his brethren; and Abda the son of Shammua, the son of Galal, the son of Jeduthun.
- 18 All the Levites in the holy city *were* 284.
- 19 Also the gatekeepers, Akkub, Talmon and their brethren that kept the gates, *were* 172.
- 20 The rest of Israel, of the priests *and* of the Levites, *were* in all the cities of Judah, each on his own inheritance.
- 21 But the temple servants were living in Ophel, and Ziha and Gishpa were in charge of the temple servants.
- 22 Now the overseer of the Levites in Jerusalem was Uzzi the son of Bani, the son of Hashabiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Mica, from the sons of Asaph, who were the singers for the service of the house of God.
- 23 For *there was* a commandment from the king concerning them and a firm regulation for the song leaders day by day.
- 24 Pethahiah the son of Meshezabel, of the sons of Zerah the son of Judah, was the king's representative in all matters concerning the people.
- 25 Now as for the villages, with their fields, some of the sons of Judah lived at Kiriath-arba, and its towns, in Dibon, and its towns, and in Jekabzeel, and its villages,
- 26 and in Jeshua, in Moladah and at Beth-pelet,
- 27 and in Hazar-shual, in Beersheba and its towns,
- 28 and in Ziklag, in Meconah and in its towns,

- 29 and in En-rimmon, in Zorah and at Jarmuth,
30 Zanoah, Adullam, and their villages, Lachish, and its fields, Azekah, and its towns.
So they encamped from Beersheba as far as the valley of Hinnom.
- 31 The sons of Benjamin also *lived* from Geba *onward*, at Michmash and Aija, at Bethel
and its towns,
- 32 Anathoth, Nob, Ananiah,
33 Hazor, Ramah, Gittaim,
34 Hadid, Zeboim, Neballat,
35 Lod and Ono, the valley of craftsmen.
36 From the Levites *some* divisions in Judah belonged to Benjamin.

Nehemiah Chapter 12

- 1 Now these are the priests and the Levites who came up with Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua: Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra,
- 2 Amariah, Malluch, Hattush,
- 3 Shecaniah, Rehum, Meremoth,
- 4 Iddo, Ginnethoi, Abijah,
- 5 Mijamin, Maadiah, Bilgah,
- 6 Shemaiah and Joiarib, Jedaiah,
- 7 Sallu, Amok, Hilkiah and Jedaiah. These were the heads of the priests and their kinsmen in the days of Jeshua.
- 8 The Levites *were* Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah, *and* Mattaniah *who was* in charge of the songs of thanksgiving, he and his brothers.
- 9 Also Bakbukiah and Unni, their brothers, stood opposite them in *their* service divisions.
- 10 Jeshua became the father of Joiakim, and Joiakim became the father of Eliashib, and Eliashib became the father of Joiada,
- 11 and Joiada became the father of Jonathan, and Jonathan became the father of Jaddua.
- 12 Now in the days of Joiakim, the priests, the heads of fathers' *households* were: of Seraiah, Meraiah; of Jeremiah, Hananiah;
- 13 of Ezra, Meshullan; of Amariah, Jehohanan;
- 14 of Malluchi, Jonathan; of Shebaniah, Joseph;
- 15 of Harim, Adna; of Meraioth, Helkai;
- 16 of Iddo, Zechariah; of Ginnethon, Meshullam;
- 17 of Abijah, Zichri; of Miniamin, of Moadiah, Piltai;
- 18 of Bilgah, Shammua; of Shemaiah, Jehonathan;
- 19 of Joiarib, Mattenai; of Jedaiah, Uzzi;
- 20 of Sallai, Kallai; of Amok, Eber;

- 21 of Hilkiah, Hashabiah; of Jedaiah, Nethanel.
- 22 As for the Levites, the heads of fathers' *households* were registered in the days of Eliashib, Joiada, and Johanan and Jaddua; so *were* the priests in the reign of Darius the Persian.
- 23 The sons of Levi, the heads of fathers' *households*, were registered in the Book of the Chronicles up to the days of Johanan the son of Eliashib.
- 24 The heads of the Levites *were* Hashabiah, Sherebiah and Jeshua the son of Kadmiel, with their brothers opposite them, to praise *and* give thanks, as prescribed by David the man of God, division corresponding to division.
- 25 Mattaniah, Bakbukiah, Obadiah, Meshullam, Talmon *and* Akkub *were* gatekeepers keeping watch at the storehouses of the gates.
- 26 These *served* in the days of Joiakim the son of Jeshua, the son of Jozadak, and in the days of Nehemiah the governor and of Ezra the priest *and* scribe.
- 27 Now at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem they sought out the Levites from all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem so that they might celebrate the dedication with gladness, with hymns of thanksgiving and with songs *to the accompaniment of* cymbals, harps and lyres.
- 28 So the sons of the singers were assembled from the district around Jerusalem, and from the villages of the Netophathites,
- 29 from Beth-gilgal and from *their* fields in Geba and Azmaveth, for the singers had built themselves villages around Jerusalem.
- 30 The priests and the Levites purified themselves; they also purified the people, the gates and the wall.
- 31 Then I had the leaders of Judah come up on top of the wall, and I appointed two great choirs, the first proceeding to the right on top of the wall toward the Refuse Gate.
- 32 Hoshaiah and half of the leaders of Judah followed them,
- 33 with Azariah, Ezra, Meshullam,
- 34 Judah, Benjamin, Shemaiah, Jeremiah,

- 35 and some of the sons of the priests with trumpets; *and* Zechariah the son of Jonathan, the son of Shemaiah, the son of Mattaniah, the son of Micaiah, the son of Zaccur, the son of Asaph,
- 36 and his kinsmen, Shemaiah, Azarel, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethanel, Jedah *and* Hanani, with the musical instruments of David the man of God. And Ezra the scribe went before them.
- 37 At the Fountain Gate they went directly up the steps of the city of David by the stairway of the wall above the house of David to the Water Gate on the east.
- 38 The second choir proceeded to the left, while I followed them with half of the people on the wall, above the Tower of Furnaces, to the Broad Wall,
- 39 and above the Gate of Ephraim, by the Old Gate, by the Fish Gate, the Tower of Hananel and the Tower of the Hundred, as far as the Sheep Gate; and they stopped at the Gate of the Guard.
- 40 Then the two choirs took their stand in the house of God. So did I and half of the officials with me;
- 41 and the priests, Eliakim, Maaseiah, Miniamin, Micaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah and Hananiah, with the trumpets;
- 42 and Maaseiah, Shemaiah, Eleazar, Uzzi, Jehohanan, Malchijah, Elam and Ezer. And the singers sang, with Jezrahiah *their* leader,
- 43 and on that day they offered great sacrifices and rejoiced because God had given them great joy, even the women and children rejoiced, so that the joy of Jerusalem was heard from afar.
- 44 On that day men were also appointed over the chambers for the stores, the contributions, the first fruits and the tithes, to gather into them from the fields of the cities the portions required by the law for the priests and Levites; for Judah rejoiced over the priests and Levites who served.
- 45 For they performed the worship of their God and the service of purification, together with the singers and the gatekeepers in accordance with the command of David *and* of his son Solomon.

- 46 For in the days of David and Asaph, in ancient times, *there were* leaders of the singers, songs of praise and hymns of thanksgiving to God.
- 47 So all Israel in the days of Zerubbabel and Nehemiah gave the portions due the singers and the gatekeepers as each day required, and set apart the consecrated *portion* for the Levites, and the Levites set apart the consecrated *portion* for the sons of Aaron.

Nehemiah Chapter 13

- 1 On that day they read from the book of Moses in the hearing of the people; and there was found written in it that no Ammonite or Moabite should ever enter the assembly of God,
- 2 because they did not meet the sons of Israel with bread and water, but hired Balaam against them to curse them. However, our God turned the curse into a blessing.
- 3 So when they heard the law, they excluded all foreigners from Israel.
- 4 Now prior to this, Eliashib the priest, who was appointed over the chambers of the house of our God, being related to Tobiah,
- 5 had prepared a large room for him, where formerly they put the grain offerings, the frankincense, the utensils and the tithes of grain, wine and oil prescribed for the Levites, the singers and the gatekeepers, and the contributions for the priests.
- 6 But during all this *time* I was not in Jerusalem, for in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon I had gone to the king. After some time, however, I asked leave from the king,
- 7 and I came to Jerusalem and learned about the evil that Eliashib had done for Tobiah, by preparing a room for him in the courts of the house of God.
- 8 It was very displeasing to me, so I threw all of Tobiah's household goods out of the room.
- 9 Then I gave an order and they cleansed the rooms; and I returned there the utensils of the house of God with the grain offerings and the frankincense.
- 10 I also discovered that the portions of the Levites had not been given *them*, so that the Levites and the singers who performed the service had gone away, each to his own field.
- 11 So I reprimanded the officials and said, "Why is the house of God forsaken?" Then I gathered them together and restored them to their posts.
- 12 All Judah then brought the tithe of the grain, wine and oil into the storehouses.

- 13 In charge of the storehouses I appointed Shelemiah the priest, Zadok the scribe, and Pedaiah of the Levites, and in addition to them was Hanan the son of Zaccur, the son of Mattaniah; for they were considered reliable, and it was their task to distribute to their kinsmen.
- 14 Remember me for this, O my God, and do not blot out my loyal deeds which I have performed for the house of my God and its service.
- 15 In those days I saw in Judah some who were treading wine presses on the sabbath, and bringing in sacks of grain and loading *them* on donkeys, as well as wine, grapes, figs and all kinds of loads, and they brought *them* into Jerusalem on the sabbath day. So I admonished *them* on the day they sold food.
- 16 Also men of Tyre were living there *who* imported fish and all kinds of merchandise and sold *them* to the sons of Judah on the sabbath, even in Jerusalem.
- 17 Then I reprimanded the nobles of Judah and said to them, “What is this evil thing you are doing, by profaning the sabbath day?”
- 18 “Did not your fathers do the same, so that our God brought on us and on this city all this trouble? Yet you are adding to the wrath on Israel by profaning the sabbath.”
- 19 It came about that just as it grew dark at the gates of Jerusalem before the sabbath, I commanded that the doors should be shut and that they should not open them until after the sabbath. Then I stationed some of my servants at the gates *so that* no load would enter on the sabbath day.
- 20 Once or twice the traders and merchants of every kind of merchandise spent the night outside Jerusalem.
- 21 Then I warned them and said to them, “Why do you spend the night in front of the wall? If you do so again, I will use force against you.” From that time on they did not come on the sabbath.
- 22 And I commanded the Levites that they should purify themselves and come as gatekeepers to sanctify the sabbath day. *For* this also remember me, O my God, and have compassion on me according to the greatness of your lovingkindness.

- 23 In those days I also saw that the Jews had married women from Ashdod, Ammon *and* Moab.
- 24 As for their children, half spoke in the language of Ashdod, and none of them was able to speak the language of Judah, but the language of his own people.
- 25 So I contented with them and cursed them and stuck some of them and pulled out their hair, and made them swear by God, “You shall not give your daughters to their sons, nor take of their daughters for your sons or for yourselves.
- 26 “Did not Solomon king of Israel sin regarding these things? Yet among the many nations there was no king like him, and he was loved by his God, and God made him king over all Israel; nevertheless the foreign women caused even him to sin.
- 27 “Do we then hear about you that you have committed all this great evil by acting unfaithfully against our God by marrying foreign women?”
- 28 Even one of the sons of Joiada, the son of Eliashib the high priest, was a son-in-law of Sanballat the Horonite, so I drove him away from me.
- 29 Remember them, O my God, because they have defiled the priesthood and the covenant of the priesthood and the Levites.
- 30 Thus I purified them from everything foreign and appointed duties for the priests and the Levites, each in his task,
- 31 and *I arranged* for the supply of wood at appointed times and for the first fruits. Remember me, O my God, for good.

POWERFULLY PRAYING THE WORD OF GOD

In His Word God reveals to us His character, heart, will, commands, promises, passion, and priorities. Therefore, when we pray according to His Word, we line ourselves up with His purposes and plans which in turn helps us to have confidence and grow in faith.

It is really very simple to pray through the Word of God. Read it out loud or silently to yourself, and turn it into a prayer. If the passage has a command, ask God to help you obey it. If it reveals a truth about God, thank and praise Him for it. If it contains a promise, proclaim it and ask Him to increase your faith in it.

Example:

READ THE SCRIPTURE: *“But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all men generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord.” James 1:5-7*

PRAY THE SCRIPTURE: Dear Lord, I praise You because you promise to give wisdom to those who ask, and I thank you Lord because I can know for sure that You will give it generously and without reproach. Help me to remember and believe, and to turn to You first when I need wisdom. I don't want to be like the surf, driven and tossed by my doubt, so help me to trust you and not doubt that You will do what You say and that you will guide me.

SPECIAL SITUATIONS

Psalms The psalms themselves are filled with different types of prayers such as worship, praise, and confession. When you pray through the Psalms you can read right from the text and make it your prayer.

Example:

READ THE SCRIPTURE: *“Praise the Lord, for the Lord is good; sing praises to His name, for it is lovely. (Psalm 135:3)*

PRAY THE SCRIPTURE: I praise you Lord for you are good. I sing praises to your name for it is lovely.

Historical Narratives or Descriptions Of Past Events Because many of these events do not directly apply to us, use these passages as an opportunity to see a truth about God—His character, ways, priorities, or purposes— and pray according to that.

Example:

READ THE SCRIPTURE: *“He smote the firstborn of Egypt, both of man and beast. He sent signs and wonders into your midst, O Egypt, upon Pharaoh and all his servants.” (Psalm 135:8-9)*

PRAY THE SCRIPTURE: Lord, You have shown your power and might when you smote the firstborn of Egypt and sent signs and wonders upon Pharaoh and all His servants. You are the same mighty and powerful God today and you are always able to accomplish your purposes on the earth. When it seems like evil is winning, or my circumstances are hard, help me to remember what you did and to know that you are a God of power and might.

About the Author

Angela Kugia Sanchez

The most ordinary of ordinary nobodies – serving an extraordinary God

Author and Bible teacher Angela Kugia Sanchez is a co-founder and director of Lampstand Retreat Ministries, Inc., which was established in 1990. Teaching and writing inductive Bible studies to help God's people become grounded in the Word of God and live in light of its truths has been her passion for over 30 years. Her prayer is that the Lord will use her gift of teaching to boldly proclaim the truths of His Word in a way that encourages practical personal application, and ignites a desire to know Him more intimately.

Angela is the author of several Bible studies that are designed to teach others how to dig God's truths out of His powerful Word for themselves.

“I saw a picture, once, of an old Bible, lids loosened, and leaves uneven; but the whole had been carefully placed on a marble table, and on top of the venerable book a pair of spectacles were folded. The fingers that turned these pages are still now, the eyes that looked through these glasses into the mysteries of the Word are closed, but the spirit that was illumined by these eternal verities sees the King in his beauty.”

(Hints on Bible Study, by John Wattles & Co. 1897)

