



REBUILD

— NEHEMIAH —

Nehemiah • January - March 2020

Overview

Nehemiah was called by God to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem after Judah's return from exile. It's a leadership classic covering perseverance, integrity, dealing with opposition and prayer. All of us are involved in leadership to some degree. Whether organisations or families or even just ourselves. Every one of us has something to learn from Nehemiah's call to rebuild.

A bit of background...

Israel's persistent unfaithfulness to the covenant meant that God exiled them. The northern kingdom first and then Judah. The north never returned but Judah did because God brought them back just as he promised. The books of Ezra and Nehemiah outline the history of Judah's return and were originally one book. Ezra (probably) returned first to rebuild the temple (458BC), Nehemiah returned about 13 years later (445BC) to rebuild the wall and re-establish the nation under the Mosaic Covenant.

REBUILD

NEHEMIAH

Week 1 • 26 January 2020 • Nehemiah 1:1-11

Nehemiah 1 is one of Scripture's great prayers following a pattern similar to Matthew 6:9-15. Why not use this as a great opportunity to guide the group through a session on prayer.

1. Rebuilding begins with realising that things are broken. (v1-4)
 - a. What's broken in our culture that you'd love to see rebuilt?

 - b. What brokenness do you see in your life that you would love to see God restore and heal? What would 'rebuild' look like?

2. Nehemiah begins with praise (v5). It reminds us of the greatness of who we draw near to in prayer. Use Scripture and things you've seen of God to praise him together



REBUILD

NEHEMIAH

Week 2 • 2 February 2020 • Nehemiah 2:1-20

1. Four months have passed since chapter 1 and Nehemiah's big opportunity opens up with the king. He's afraid but quickly prays mid-conversation before stepping forward boldly.
 - a. What is the relationship between longer private prayer and short silent prayer in public?
 - b. When might such a prayer be useful for you?
 - c. What situations could be different were you to employ such an approach?

2. The opposition to Nehemiah's presence and plan was immediate - he is mocked and ridiculed. (v19)
 - a. What good intention or bold idea never made it past the first step because someone laughed or said it couldn't be done?
 - b. How does this passage make you think differently? Do you need to start something up again?

3. Nehemiah's response to the mocking was trust in God. (v20)
 - a. What have we seen of Nehemiah so far that contributed to that confidence?
 - b. What steps can you take to deepen your trust of God?



REBUILD

NEHEMIAH

Week 3 • 9 February 2020 • Nehemiah 4:1-23

1. The people's response to the opposition was to pray - it reminds us of Jesus' words in Luke 6:27.
 - a. Who is most opposed to your faith or makes life most difficult for you as a Jesus follower?
 - b. Why not pray together *for* them right now?
2. Nehemiah's response is spiritual and practical - e.g. v9.
 - a. Why are both important?
 - b. What challenges are you facing right now - as individuals or as a group?
 - c. What are some practical and prayerful responses to this?
3. As we think about our vision to see 1% of unchurched Wellington become baptised followers of Jesus Christ, what steps will you take practically and in prayer?
4. One of the themes in this passage is praying and working together in pursuit of a vision.
 - a. Why is working together as a group important? (e.g. Romans 12:4-5).
 - b. What steps could your group take to pursue this more?



REBUILD

NEHEMIAH

Week 4 • 16 February 2020 • Nehemiah 5:1-19

1. Nehemiah realises that some of the Jews are being overlooked and oppressed by their own people. Talk together about the people or types of people that are most at risk of being overlooked or inadvertently oppressed in our church?

2. Jesus gave the church one new commandment - John 13:34-35.
 - a. Why is this so important for us?

 - b. Take a few moments to prayerfully consider these verses and then talk together - who do you sense God is calling you to love like this right now?

3. Nehemiah could have taken his full allocation of food and lauded it over the people. Instead, he took less and gathered lots of people around the dinner table.
 - a. What do you notice about Nehemiah's character and why is this important in leadership (whether of self, homes, work, churches, nations)?

4. Jesus agrees with Nehemiah in Matthew 23:3-4 - he was critical of expecting things from others that we don't live out ourselves.
 - a. In what ways might this be a danger for you?

 - b. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal it to you and then share and pray together.

REBUILD

NEHEMIAH

Week 5 • 23 February 2020 • Nehemiah 6:1-7:3

1. With the job almost done, Nehemiah's opponents appear friendly but are actually scheming to harm him. 2 Corinthians 2:11 says that the devil has schemes against us. What do you think some of those schemes might be?
2. Their plot seems to be to distract Nehemiah from his work. How do you see things in your world trying to distract you from what God is calling you to do?
3. A consistent word used throughout this passage is 'intimidate' or 'frighten' (this is the same word in Hebrew).
 - a. As you think about following Jesus or pursuing God's call in your life, what is most scary to you and why?
 - b. What do you notice about the source of confidence from the two groups in the passage? (v9 and v 16).
4. What ways are most helpful for you in finding strength and confidence in God? What practical steps can you take in response to this today?



REBUILD

NEHEMIAH

Week 6 • 8 March 2020 • Nehemiah 8:1-18

1. The people get to have Scripture read and explained to them so they can understand it - perhaps for the first time in their lives!
 - a. What benefits of Scripture are described in these verses? (Psalm 19:7-11 & 2 Timothy 3:15-17)
 - b. How have you seen some of these aspects in your own life as you have engaged with Scripture?

2. Think about your own personal interaction with Scripture.
 - a. What does reading the Bible look like for you? Share so that we can learn from one another. Are there challenges that others can help with?
 - b. What is something you are learning from Scripture that you are seeking to apply in your life right now?

3. As the people discover God's law they remember a festival they've forgotten - the Feast of Tabernacles. It was where Israel made tents to remember their journey through the desert. It was to remind them of God's faithfulness and how far they had come.
 - a. What was life like before you believed in Jesus? What changes have been most pronounced since then?
 - b. How have you seen the faithfulness of God in your life?



REBUILD

NEHEMIAH

Week 7 • 15 March 2020 • Nehemiah 9:1 - 10:39

1. The passage begins with the people confessing and grieved over sin and its consequences.
 - a. What is the purpose of grief over sin? (2 Corinthians 7:10)
 - b. What difference does it make when we're truly grieved over sin?

2. The people then praise God for who he has shown himself to be throughout Israel's history (v5-37).
 - a. What do you notice about the character of God?
 - b. How is this enhanced in light of the people's behaviour?
 - c. Why not take some time to thank God together for what you see of his character in these verses?

3. The people commit to live differently and obey God. Why is our potential to live right before God different because of Jesus? (Ezekial 11:19-20)

4. Have a look at John 8:31-38.
 - a. Why is obedience still important despite the fact that we're fully forgiven through Jesus?

 - b. Where do you sense God urging you towards greater obedience? Share and pray together knowing that it's God who changes our hearts.

REBUILD

NEHEMIAH

Week 8 • 22 March 2020 • Nehemiah 12:1-13:31

1. One of the themes of this passage is compromise - notice how quickly the people have gone back to old habits or accepted back practices they passionately renounced (see 20:28-39).
 - a. What have you learned about walking free of areas of sin permanently?
 - b. Where do you find it tempting to compromise and tolerate sin? How can you pray and look out for one another in this?

2. Nehemiah is shown to be a man of integrity. He appears to be consistent in right living even when everyone else is going in the opposite direction.
 - a. What does it take to be someone willing to stand up for what is right when you're the only one?
 - b. Are there places and relationships where this is a challenge right now?

3. Nehemiah closes with another prayer - this time he's calling on God to remember him for what he's doing. What have you been learning about prayer over this series and how is it impacting your prayer life personally?

