

THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAH

Introduction:

1. **Old Testament** - Why study it?
 - a. Rom. 15:4 - For our learning, patience and comfort
 - b. I Cor. 10:6,11 - For examples to us
 - c. Heb. 8:5; 9:9; 10:1 - For shadows of the true body
2. **Time** - Twentieth year of Artaxerxes King of Persia (Artaxerxes became king in 464, thus it was 444 B.C.) to the thirty-second year (432 B.C.). (Neh. 5:14; 13:6).
 - a. 606 B.C. - Jews go into Babylonian captivity
 - b. 536 B.C. - Released from captivity by Cyrus king of Persia
 - c. 516 B.C. - Began rebuilding temple under Zerubbabel
 - d. 458 B.C. - Ezra comes to Jerusalem
 - e. 445 B.C. - Nehemiah comes to Jerusalem
3. **Summary** - Nehemiah's personal narrative concerning his journey from the Persian palace to Jerusalem, and the work he accomplished there in rebuilding the walls of the city.
4. **Lesson** - Despite the efforts of enemies, great things can be accomplished if there is a well devised plan and will power to execute the plan.
 - a. We need to organize under the banner of Christ to follow his plan.
 - b. Satan cannot hinder us if we refuse to let him.
5. **Memory Verses** - 4:6; 6:15; 8:8

1. Work Started on the Walls - (1:1-3:32)

- a. What is known of Nehemiah and his position? (Neh. 1:1; 1:11; 2:1)
 - i. What the work of cupbearer?
 - ii. What wine?
 1. Gen. 49:11 - Blood of the grape
 2. Jud. 9:13 - wine on the vine
 3. Isa. 65:8 - wine in the cluster
 4. William Patton's, "Bible Wines"
 - iii. How rise to eminent position in foreign land?
 1. Would have been rich and comfortable?
 2. Still cared about the condition of God's people.
 - iv. Other followers of God who did the same?
 1. Joseph
 2. Daniel
 3. Esther
- b. How did Nehemiah become interested in repairing Jerusalem? (1:2-3)
 - i. How did Jerusalem fall into such a state? (II Chron. 36:19)
 - ii. What so important about the walls? (Num. 13:28; Deut. 1:28)
 - iii. What about patriotism?
 - iv. What about honoring the deceased?
 - v. What about credible witnesses and their testimony? (Mark 16:14)
- c. Why the prayer? (1:4-11)
 - i. What about anxiety? (Phil. 4:6; I Pet. 5:7)

- ii. Does prayer do anything? (Jas. 5:16; I Pet. 3:12)
- iii. Note Nehemiah's prayers (*began, continued, and ended* his work):
 - 1. 1:5-11
 - 2. 2:4; 4:4-5; 5:19; 6:9,14;
 - 3. 13:22,29,31
- iv. Love and observe commandments (John 14:15; I John 5:3)
- v. What did their sin have to do with the deplorable conditions? (1:6-7)
- vi. What is Nehemiah quoting in 1:8-9?
- vii. Who is "this man"? (1:11)
- d. What was Nehemiah's request and the king's response? (2:1-8)
 - i. *Three months* had passed since Nehemiah heard the report about Jerusalem
 - 1. Abib or Nisan (*March/April*)
 - 2. Ziv or Iyar (*April/May*)
 - 3. Sivan (*May/June*)
 - 4. Thammuz or Tammuz (*June/July*)
 - 5. Ab (*July/August*)
 - 6. Elul (*August/September*)
 - 7. Ethanim or Tishri (*September/October*)
 - 8. Bul or Marchesvan (*October/November*)
 - 9. Chisleu (*November/December*)
 - 10. Tebeth (*December/January*)
 - 11. Sebat or Shebat (*January/February*)
 - 12. Adar (*February/March*)
 - ii. Note the short/sudden prayer and consider occasions we might do the same.
 - iii. Note his respect to the king (Rom. 13:1-7; I Pet. 3:13-17)
 - iv. He asked to go to the city to "build it" (2:5), which included the palace, wall, and governors house (2:8).
 - v. He, like Moses, decided to suffer with the people of God (Heb. 11:25).
- e. How did Nehemiah acquaint himself with conditions? (2:9-16)
 - i. Why at night?
 - ii. Who are Tobiah and Sanballat? (6:18; 13:28; 4:2)
 - 1. Josephus says that Sanballat was "satrap of Samaria"
 - 2. Probably among the governors of 2:9
 - 3. Enmity from the time of Zerubbabel's rejection of Samaritans request to help rebuild the temple? (Ezra 4:3)
 - iii. Rested three days as Ezra (2:11; Ezra 8:2)
 - iv. What significance "no place for beast to pass"? (2:14)
- f. How did the people respond to Nehemiah's suggestions? (2:17-20)
 - i. Jerusalem in depressing state?
 - ii. Warnings/"negative" preaching motivational? (Col. 1:28; I Cor. 15:58)
- g. Note their organization to do the work (3:1-32)
 - i. Why such division of workers?
 - ii. Notables:
 - 1. High priest worked (3:1)
 - 2. Nobles not work (3:5)
 - 3. Rulers worked (3:9,12,17-19)

- 4. Daughters worked (3:12)
- iii. Why some “builded” and others “repaired”

2. Opposition and How it was Overcome - (4:1-6:19)

- a. How did Nehemiah’s enemies express their contempt? (4:1-6)
 - i. Jesus’ enemies - Matt. 27:29
 - ii. Paul’s enemies - Acts 17:32
 - iii. Our enemies - II Tim. 3:12; Mat. 5:10-12
- b. What tactics did enemies use against this work? (4:7-12)
 - i. Roy H. Lanier calls “fifth column” tactics; four columns of the enemy from without, the fifth coming from within.
 - ii. Does the church sometimes develop a “fifth column”? If so, how? And how can it be prevented? (Gal. 5:9,15,26)
- c. How did Nehemiah overcome this danger? (4:13-23)
 - i. He armed the workmen with the sword and the trowel.
 - ii. Should be a plan for offense, but no defense?
 - iii. Does the Lord’s church have enemies? Who? How fight them? (Eph. 6:10-13)
- d. In what way were the poor oppressed? (5:1-5)
 - i. What wrong with this? (Lev. 25:35-46; Deut. 25:19-20)
 - ii. First internal conflict in the church (Acts 6:1-7)
- e. What was done to correct the situation? (5:6-13)
 - i. What about anger? (Mark 3:5; Eph. 4:26)
 - ii. What about rebuke? (Heb. 12:5-6; Rev. 3:19)
- f. What good example did Nehemiah set for the people? (5:14-19)
- g. What did his enemies next suggest to hinder him? (6:1-4)
 - i. What did Nehemiah’s statement imply about the importance of their desire?
 - ii. Does the church have distractions to face/reject? (Luke 8:14; 10:38-42)
- h. Threat enemies next make? (6:5-9)
 - i. “Open letter” in Orient an insult.
 - ii. Is there a sense of fear that would be sinful? (Rev. 21:8; Matt. 10:28)
 - iii. What ways the church intimidated?
- i. How false prophet try to hinder work? (6:10-14)
 - i. What safety in the temple? Why a “sin”?
 - ii. False prophets outside/inside the church? (II Pet. 2:1; I John 4:1)
 - iii. Examples of false teachings that get us into trouble? (denm., instr., grace/faith)
- j. How long did it take to finish the wall? (6:15)
- k. How Nehemiah’s actions known to outside enemies? (6:16-19)
 - i. Why Jews report to this man?
 - ii. How can family/political/social ties affect us?

3. The Genealogy of Zerubbabel’s Caravan - (7:1-7:3)

- a. Who is appointed ruler and what is he charged with? (7:1-3)
 - i. Qualified men selected to rule (Exd. 18:21; Acts 6:3; I Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9)
 - ii. Why wait to open the gates?
 - iii. What Jesus say about fleeing Jerusalem on the sabbath? (Matt. 24:19-20)
- b. Why few Jews in Jerusalem? (7:4)

- i. Threat of the enemies?
- ii. To repopulate Jerusalem
 - 1. Genealogy
 - 2. Reading law
 - 3. Feast of tabernacles
 - 4. Appointments (11:1-2)
- c. How many Jews returned with Zerubbabel? (7:5-7,66)
 - i. How many servants? (7:67)
 - ii. How many animals? (7:68-69)

3. The Book of the Law Read and Reforms (8:1-10:31)

- a. Tell of the reading of the law and its effect on the people (8:1-12)
- b. What feast had been neglected and what was done? (8:13-18)
 - i. Seventh month feast of booths/tabernacles (Lev. 23:33-44; Deut. 31:10-11)
- c. Tell how the Jews confessed God's goodness in spite of their sins (9:1-37)
 - i. Did not deny sin (9:2)
 - ii. Sabbath made known at Sinai, refutes 7th Day Adventist (9:14)
 - iii. No doubt concerning the origin of the law (9:14)
- d. Into what covenants did the people willingly enter? (10:28-39)
 - i. No heathen marriages (10:30)
 - ii. No buying on sabbath (10:31)
 - iii. Give offering to the temple work (10:32-39)
- e. How were the people divided to dwell in Jerusalem and other cities? (11:1-36)

4. Repopulating Jerusalem and Dedicating the Walls (11:1-12:47)

- a. How was Jerusalem repopulated and why unpopulated? (11:1-36)
- b. Describe the dedication of the walls (12:27-47)
 - i. Where Nehemiah and Ezra both involved?
 - ii. Were the enemies able to hear the celebration? (12:43)

5. Nehemiah's Second Trip to Jerusalem (13:1-31)

- a. How long was Nehemiah's first stay in Jerusalem? (1:1; 2:1; 13:6)
- b. What was done with the Ammonites and the Moabites, and why? (13:1-3; Num. 22, 23)
- c. Who was Tobiah? What was done to him? (4:3,7; 6:1; 13:4-9)
- d. What was done for the Levites? (13:10-14)
- e. How was the sabbath law being violated? (13:15-18)
- f. What was done to correct this abuse? (13:19-22)
- g. How was the marriage law with aliens being violated? (13:23-27)
- h. Who was used as an example to warn them against such marriages? (13:26; I Kin. 11:1-13)
- i. Who was Sanballat, and how had he gained influence? (4:7; 6:1; 13:28-29)