

NEHEMIAH: THE MAN WHO REBUILT JERUSALEM

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: [Nehemiah 2:17-20](#). From Roy H. Enoch (06-26-1994).
- B. Jeremiah 29 was written to assure the Jewish exiles in Babylon that they would return to Israel.
 - 1. First, Jeremiah assures them that they will not be delivered soon, but that they should build houses and plant vineyards.
 - 2. Secondly, he assures them that after 70 years that God will restore them to their land.
- C. Several leaders brought groups back to be restored in their land.
 - 1. Zerubbabel led the first group of about 50,000 to restore the city and temple worship in 538BC and the temple was completed in 516BC.
 - 2. Ezra led a second group of about 1750 men with the gold utensils for the temple and money to restore the worship in about 458BC. (Ezra was a priest and scribe.)
 - 3. Nehemiah came to rebuild the walls and restore the security of the city in 444BC.
- D. This lesson: how Nehemiah led the people in this great work.
 - 1. He prayed fervently about the need.
 - 2. He planned the work.
 - 3. He dealt with opposition to the work.
 - 4. He completed the work.

I. NEHEMIAH PRAYED FERVENTLY ABOUT THE NEED (Neh. 1:5-11).

- A. Brethren from Jerusalem reported the sad state of the city and the fear of the people. Nehemiah mourned and wept for many days (Neh. 1:3).
- B. He prayed fervently to God.
 - 1. He praised God for his goodness and blessings.
 - 2. He confessed his own sins and those of the people.
 - 3. He prayed for God to "let your servant prosper this day... and grant him mercy in the sight of this man" (the king).
- C. He was the cupbearer of King Artaxerxes I, also called Longimanus who was the stepson of Queen Esther.
 - 1. The cupbearer was one of the most trusted positions in the palace, since many kings were killed by poison.
 - 2. He brought wine to the king with a sad face. The king asked why was he sad, and Nehemiah told him of the deplorable condition of his own city.
 - 3. The king asked what he wished and Nehemiah prayed as he asked to be allowed to go and rebuild his city.
 - 4. The king granted him a leave, gave him authority to do the work at the king's expense and sent captains of the army for and horsemen for his protection making Nehemiah governor.

II. HE PLANNED THE WORK.

- A. After he had been in Jerusalem for three days, he went secretly by night to inspect the walls and condition of the city.
 - 1. He told no one of his mission until he had inspected the situation and could plan the work.
 - 2. He then called the leaders of the people and challenged them (Neh. 2:17-18).
- B. The work was organized w/ people working near their homes or on a specific portion of the wall. The people accepted responsibility for a section of the wall and worked on that section (Neh. 3:23).

III. NEHEMIAH DEALT WITH OPPOSITION TO THE WORK.

- A. Those of the surrounding nations hated to see Jerusalem rebuilt (Neh. 2:10).
 - 1. Sanballat was governor at this time of Samaria which included Judea.

2. He could see that this would end his rule over Jerusalem.
 3. Tobiah and the Ammonites were from the area east of the Jordan and Jericho.
 4. These could see their influence decrease if Jerusalem was strong again.
- B. They used ridicule at first (Neh. 2:19; 4:1-3). The ridicule was ignored.
 - C. Then they used threats of attack (Neh. 4:7-9,11). They prepared a defense and kept on working (Neh. 4:16-18).
 - D. When threats of attack did not work, the enemies wanted to have a meeting to talk about it. They sent a letter reporting rumors of rebellion by Nehemiah and the people (Neh. 6:1-3,5-9). Religious leaders today will also unite with those they do not agree with in order to oppose the teaching of the NT which condemns their doctrines.
 - E. The enemy then sent spies to make them afraid (Neh. 6:10-11).
 - F. Some of their own people hindered the work.
 1. While the people were working, some would not help (Neh. 3:5).
 2. Some were taking advantage of the hardship of the people (Neh. 5:1-5,11,12).
 3. Some were prophets were hired to make Nehemiah and the people afraid (Neh. 6:14).
 4. Some had alliances with the enemy (Neh. 6:17-18).

IV. **THEY DID COMPLETE THE WORK.**

- A. The opposition was overcome (Neh. 6:15). The people no longer feared the opposition.
- B. Nehemiah, the governor, made other changes that helped their security.
 1. The city was large and had very few people.
 2. He asked the people for some families who would move to the city for greater security and many did.
 3. He asked Ezra, the priest and scribe, to teach the law to the people so that they would be closer to God (Neh. 8).

CONCLUSION.

- A. We have difficulties in the Lord's work today that these lessons should help.
- B. We need to study these examples to help us today (Rom. 15:4).
- C. Nehemiah was successful because he was a good leader.
 1. He prayed fervently to the Lord about the needs.
 2. He planned the work.
 3. He overcame the difficulties of opposition.
 4. He finished the work.
- D. We need to do these things also.