

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: [Nehemiah 2:17-20](#).
- B. From Roy H. Enoch (6-26-94).
- C. Jeremiah 29 assured the Jewish exiles in Babylon that they would return to Israel.
- D. 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. The temple was completed in 516BC.
 - 2. Ezra led a second group of about 1750 men w/ 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.
- E. 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 w/ opposition to the work.
 - 4. He completed the work.

I. FIRST, NEHEMIAH PRAYED FERVENTLY ABOUT THE NEED.

- A. See [Neh. 1:5-11](#).
- B. Brethren from Jerusalem reported the sad state of the city and the fear of the people (Neh. 1:3). Nehemiah mourned and wept for many days.

And 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."
- C. 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).
- D. Nehemiah was the cupbearer to 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. When asked why, Nehemiah told him of the deplorable condition of his own city (Jerusalem).
 - 3. The king asked what he wished and Nehemiah prayed as he asked to be allowed to go and rebuild Jerusalem.
 - 4. The king granted him a leave, gave him authority to do the work at the king's expense, and sent army captains w/horsemen for his protection, making Nehemiah governor.

II. SECOND, NEHEMIAH 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 until he had inspected the situation and could plan the work.
 - 2. He then called the leaders of the people and challenged them (see [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 and worked on their section of the wall (Neh. 3:23).

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.

III. THIRD, NEHEMIAH DEALT WITH OPPOSITION TO THE WORK.

- A. Those of the surrounding nations hated to see Jerusalem rebuilt (Neh. 2:10).
And 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.
 - 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 (see **Neh. 2:19; 4:1-3**). The ridicule was ignored.
- C. Then they used threats of attack (see **Neh. 4:7-9, 11**). They prepared a defense and kept on working (see **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 (see **Neh. 6:1-3, 5-9**). Religious leaders today will also unite w/ 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 (see **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).
Moreover, next to him the Tekoites made repairs, but their nobles did not support the work of their masters.
 - 2. Some were taking advantage of the hardship of the people (see **Neh. 5:1-5**; Neh. 5:11-12).
"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.
 - 3. Some prophets were hired to make Nehemiah and the people afraid (Neh. 6:14).
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.
 - 4. Some had alliances w/the enemy (Neh. 6:17-18).
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.

IV. FOURTH, THEY COMPLETED THE WORK.

- A. The opposition was overcome; the people had to fear no longer (Neh. 6:15).
So the wall was completed on the twenty-fifth of the month Elul, in fifty-two days.
- 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 of some families to move to the city for greater security.
 - 3. He asked Ezra, to teach the people the Law, so that they would be closer to God (Neh. 8).

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

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