

# NEHEMIAH

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Among us, there are some people who are natural born leaders, such as Lee lococha, General Patton, Moses, of course Jesus. They just know how to take a charge in the situation and get the job done. Also there are some people who are not leaders, but they want to be leaders and so they undermine some wicked plots against those leaders. Then there are followers. Nothing wrong with being followers. Not everyone can be leaders. The followers can do their best and be a part of the project they need to accomplish. By everyone doing their parts, wonderful result can happen.

In the book of Nehemiah, we not only can learn what a great leadership Nehemiah had, but also we can learn how we can prepare ourselves, as the Body of Christ, working together, worshipping the Lord in proper way and fighting against the enemy of God.

The Book of Nehemiah was written obviously by Nehemiah, some people say that it could be Ezra somewhere around 430 B.C. The Book was written to remind the returned exiles of their spiritual heritage.

Many of us think that the Books of the Bible are placed in chronological order. That is not true. As a matter of fact, the first written Scripture is the Book of Job in somewhere around 1900-1700 B.C. After that Genesis was written by Moses in 1440 B.C. Even though Nehemiah is placed a way before Daniel, the true timeline says that Daniel's time (605-536 B.C.) was before.

### **A. A MAN WITH MANY HATS, BUT A SINGLE HEART FOR GOD**

I wear many hats. A husband, parent, child, graphic designer, bible teacher, church volunteer, and filling in for other Calvary pastors while they are on vacation. But we see in the Book of Nehemiah, we see Nehemiah wearing three different hats during this period. The Book begins with him being a cupbearer to the King of Persia, but soon he puts on the hard hat of the builder. After the wall was built, Nehemiah puts on the hat of a governor. Even though Nehemiah was a man with many hats, he had a single heart for God!

Nehemiah reminds me of John Wayne, the Duke. With a tough hide, he could stand alone against onslaught of enemy's attacks and confusion. But yet he had a tender heart to his God. It is easy to think that the Old Testaments are nothing more than some historical things and thinking that only the New Testaments contain the truth of the Gospel of Jesus. But we can see examples after examples of godly people as well as ungodly people and the consequences of their stupidity in the OT. We can find a great example of a godly man, Nehemiah, and we can apply his actions into our lives.

### **B. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

This book must be read in light of the circumstances surrounding the life of Nehemiah. There was a united kingdom under the reigns of Saul, David and Solomon. During the latter years of Solomon's reign, however, his moral compromises became so great that God finally judged him.

*1 Kings 11:11-12 Therefore the Lord said to Solomon, "Because you have done this, and have not kept My covenant and My statutes, which I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom away from you and give it to your servant. Nevertheless I will not do it in your days, for the sake of your father David; I will tear it out of the hand of your son.*

There were two spited kingdoms: Northern kingdom, Israel, with 10 tribes in the capital of Samaria. It was conquered by Assyria in 722 B.C. Southern kingdom, Judah was consisted with 2 tribes in the capital of Jerusalem. They were invaded by Babylonia in 606 B.C. for 70 year captivity.

Nehemiah was a child of a Holocaust. He was born to parents who had been taken into captivity. As a result, he never knew what it was like to live as a free man until his adult years. Nehemiah could been a deeply scarred man as a captive, but he emerged beautifully. He was the king Artaxerxes' choice man. He was a cupbearer. Somebody try to kill the king by poison, "Long live, the King! Sayonara, the cup-bearer!" His position was a place of the king's trust.

### **C. PERSONAL BACKGROUND**

Even though Nehemiah was the second generation captive, he never has forgotten his heritage. We should be like Nehemiah. Yes, we are captives of these sinful human bodies. But we are free men and free women in Christ Jesus who truly set us free from the bondage. We have the true freedom that any demonic forces cannot hold us back, we have the liberty in Jesus that we are no longer bound by our sins and death, but to have everlasting life in Christ in heaven.

When Nehemiah heard that the wall of Jerusalem was laying in ruin, he wept and mourned for days by bring the burden to God in prayer. O, how we should learn his way and attitude! Instead of trying to solve the problems with our own strength, we should bring it to Him who is capable to do more than we can imagine.

*1 Peter 5:7 casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.*

*Philippians 4:6-7 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

### **D. THE WALL OF JERUSALEM**

You might say, "What is the big deal with some walls around the city of Jerusalem?" It was a big deal at that time. They did not have completed attack weapons like now. So they had to solely rely on foot soldiers' attacks to conquer cities. If you have a wall around your city, it is a lot easy to defeat the attacks of these foot soldiers from your elevated position. That is like us spiritually. If we have the spiritual wall of God's Word around our hearts, when demonic forces attack us with their dirty tricks and temptations, we will be able to defeat them easily. Without that spiritual wall, we would be an easy prey of the enemy.

### **E. APPLICATIONS**

Before we enter into Nehemiah's struggle to rebuild Jerusalem's walls, maybe some of us need to examine the status of our own spiritual walls. Are there any gates that have been left open for the enemy to slip through? Has neglect allowed a loose piece of stone or mortar to become a hole, a gap? Are our actions and words examples of Christians as we all should be? Do we laugh and enjoy dirty jokes with

non-believers, because we don't want them to think that we are some sissy Christian? Let's fill up the holes, let's hang the gates, let's build the walls around our hearts to protect it from the enemy's attacks.

**1) Develop a genuine concern for the condition of our spiritual wall.**

The wall building project didn't start by laying bricks. It started with a burden in one man's heart. Like Nehemiah, we must have a genuine concern for the condition of our spiritual walls.

**2) Express direct prayer for guidance and protection.**

Not as an afterthought, prayer to the Lord should be the foremost thing. Let's get in the habit of acting on our burdens only after we have given them a firm foundation of prayer.

**3) Face the situation honestly and with determination until the task is finished.**

Without honest appraisals of the conditions of our own spiritual walls, we will always be running out of determination before the gaps are filled.

**4) Recognize that we cannot correct the condition alone.**

Our natural tendency is to revert to a spiritual wilderness. It is only when we are willing to live in dependence upon God that we'll have the power to erect the spiritual walls we need for survival.